

BLACK'S

# Life of Goldsmith

Fred. M. Sykes.

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*Oliver Goldsmith*

# English Men of Letters

High School Edition

## THE LIFE OF GOLDSMITH

BY  
WILLIAM BLACK

*WITH ANNOTATIONS AND APPENDIX*

BY  
F. H. SYKES, M.A.

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### NOTE ON THE AUTHOR.

Mr. William Black was born in Glasgow in 1841. In his early years he manifested two characteristics—a love of botany and a love of art—which seem in some measure to have foretold the love of nature and the faculty of picturesque description that mark the mature man. He was introduced to literature, so to speak, by writing essays on Ruskin, Kingsley, and Carlyle, which he contributed to a newspaper of his native town. This introduction led to an acquaintance with journalism in the form of the *Weekly Citizen*, the staff of which he joined. The year 1864 found him taking the Scotchman's 'noblest prospect,' and entering on newspaper life in London, where in two years he had made his mark, and had become special correspondent of the *Morning Star* in the Prusso-Austrian War.

Scenes in this life as a war-correspondent prompted the publication of a novel *Love or Marriage* (1867). It was a failure. So in a mitigated sense were *In Silk Attire*, *Kilmeny*, and *The Monarch of Mincing Lane*. But here Mr. Black's apprenticeship ended, and from the publication of *A Daughter of Heth* in 1871, we have from his pen a series of novels, which, because of their variety and freshness of incident, their manly breezy atmosphere, their splendid and faithful picture of scenic effects, have given him a reputation that extends throughout the world, and falls little short of that of an

English classic. No reader of fiction to-day has failed to enjoy the quiet scenes of a driving excursion from London to Edinburgh that form the background of *The Strange Adventures of a Phaeton*; there is none that has not loved and sympathized with the island heroine of *A Princess of Thule* in the London house of her obtuse husband, or deeply felt the tragic endings of *Madcap Violet* and *Macleod of Dare*. Pure, healthy love stories, reading people never tire of, and almost every year brings a welcome volume from Mr. Black's pen. *Shandon Bells*, *Yolande*, *Judith Shakespeare*, *White Heather*, *In Far Lochaber*, *The New Prince Fortunatus* are all familiar names wherever English is read.

For over fifteen years Mr. Black has withdrawn from journalism. In his chambers in Buckingham Square in London, or in his "Paston Place" at the sea port of Brighton, he spends his indoor life; but his home is rather out of doors. One prefers to picture the man—lithe, active, strong, though under middle height—in his swinging walks over the moors of Brighton, or stag-hunting and salmon-fishing in the Highlands, or handling the tiller of his yacht, *White Dove*, as she sheers the waves of the stormy Hebrides. "You never need starve," said an old Highland skipper to him, "for you could always make a living as a pilot in the Western Highlands."

Mr. Black the novelist so overshadows Mr. Black the biographer and critic, that the latter scarcely attracts attention. Yet, in truth, this one critical work of our author is to such an extent apart from his real work as a writer, that this neglect is in no way surprising. Indeed, the reader of the present Life will be tempted to class it, not in the company of *A Princess of Thule* or *Madcap Violet*, where the author has put his experience and his best spirit, but rather consign it to that department of work to which he himself consigns Goldsmith's critical contributions to the *Monthly* and the *Critical Review*.

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# GOLDSMITH.

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## CHAPTER I.

### INTRODUCTORY.

“INNOCENTLY to amuse the imagination in this dream of life is wisdom.” So wrote Oliver Goldsmith; and surely among those who have earned the world’s gratitude by this ministration he must be accorded a conspicuous place. If, in these delightful writings of his, he mostly avoids the darker problems of existence—if the mystery of the tragic and apparently unmerited and unrequited suffering in the world is rarely touched upon—we can pardon the omission for the sake of the gentle optimism that would rather look on the kindly side of life. “You come hot and tired from the day’s battle, and this sweet minstrel sings to you,” says Mr. Thackeray. “Who could harm the kind vagrant harper? Whom did he ever hurt? He carries no weapon save the harp on which he plays to you; and with which he delights great and humble, young and old, the captains in the tents, or the soldiers round the fire, or the women and children in the villages, at whose porches he stops and sings his simple songs of love and beauty.” And it is to be suspected—it is to be hoped, at least—that the cheerfulness which shines like sunlight through Goldsmith’s writings, did not altogether desert himself even in the most trying hours of his wayward and troubled career. He had, with all his sensitiveness, a fine happy-go-lucky disposition; was ready for a frolic when he had a guinea, and, when he had none, could turn a sentence on the humorous side of starvation; and certainly

never attributed to the injustice or neglect of society misfortunes the origin of which lay nearer home.

Of course a very dark picture might be drawn of Goldsmith's life; and the sufferings that he undoubtedly endured have been made a whip with which to lash the ingratitude of a world not too quick to recognise the claims of genius. He has been put before us, without any brighter lights to the picture, as the most unfortunate of poor devils; the heart-broken usher; the hack ground down by sordid booksellers; the starving occupant of successive garrets. This is the aspect of Goldsmith's career which naturally attracts Mr. Forster. Mr. Forster seems to have been haunted throughout his life by the idea that Providence had some especial spite against literary persons; and that, in a measure to compensate them for their sad lot, society should be very kind to them, while the Government of the day might make them Companions of the Bath or give them posts in the Civil Service. In the otherwise copious, thorough, and valuable *Life and Times of Oliver Goldsmith*, we find an almost humiliating insistence on the complaint that Oliver Goldsmith did not receive greater recognition and larger sums of money from his contemporaries. Goldsmith is here "the poor neglected sizar;" his "marked ill-fortune" attends him constantly; he shares "the evil destinies of men of letters;" he was one of those who "struggled into fame without the aid of English institutions;" in short, "he wrote, and paid the penalty." Nay, even Christianity itself is impeached on account of the persecution suffered by poor Goldsmith. "There had been a Christian religion extant for seventeen hundred and fifty-seven years," writes Mr. Forster, "the world having been acquainted, for even so long, with its spiritual necessities and responsibilities; yet here, in the middle of the eighteenth century, was the eminence ordinarily conceded to a spiritual teacher, to one of those men who come upon the earth to lift their fellow-men above its miry ways. He is up in a garret, writing for bread he cannot get,

and dunned for a milk-score he cannot pay." That Christianity might have been worse employed than in paying the milkman's score is true enough, for then the milkman would have come by his own ; but that Christianity, or the state, or society should be scolded because an author suffers the natural consequences of his allowing his expenditure to exceed his income, seems a little hard. And this is a sort of writing that is peculiarly inappropriate in the case of Goldsmith, who, if ever any man was author of his own misfortune, may fairly have the charge brought against him. "Men of genius," says Mr. Forster, "can more easily starve, than the world, with safety to itself, can continue to neglect and starve them." Perhaps so ; but the English nation, which has always had a regard and even love for Oliver Goldsmith, that is quite peculiar in the history of literature, and which has been glad to overlook his faults and follies, and eager to sympathise with him in the many miseries of his career, will be slow to believe that it is responsible for any starvation that Goldsmith may have endured.

However, the key-note has been firmly struck, and it still vibrates. Goldsmith was the unluckiest of mortals, the hapless victim of circumstances. "Yielding to that united pressure of labour, penury, and sorrow, with a frame exhausted by unremitting and ill-rewarded drudgery, Goldsmith was indebted to the forbearance of creditors for a peaceful burial." But what, now, if some foreigner strange to the traditions of English literature—some Japanese student, for example, or the New Zealander come before his time—were to go over the ascertained facts of Goldsmith's life, and were suddenly to announce to us, with the happy audacity of ignorance, that he, Goldsmith was a quite exceptionally fortunate person ? "Why," he might say, "I find that in a country where the vast majority of people are born to labour, Oliver Goldsmith was never asked to do a stroke of work towards the earning of his own living until he arrived at man's estate. All that was expected of him, as a

youth and as a young man, was that he should equip himself fully for the battle of life. He was maintained at college until he had taken his degree. Again and again he was furnished with funds for further study and foreign travel; and again and again he gambled his opportunities away. The constant kindness of his uncle only made him the best begging-letter-writer the world has seen. In the midst of his debt and distress as a bookseller's drudge, he receives £400 for three nights' performance of *The Good-Natured Man*; he immediately purchases chambers in Brick Court for £400; and forthwith begins to borrow as before. It is true that he died owing £2000, and was indebted to the forbearance of creditors for a peaceful burial; but it appears that during the last seven years of his life he had been earning an annual income equivalent to £800 of English currency.\* He was a man liberally and affectionately brought up, who had many relatives and many friends, and who had the proud satisfaction—which has been denied to many men of genius—of knowing for years before he died that his merits as a writer had been recognised by the great bulk of his countrymen. And yet this strange English nation is inclined to suspect that it treated him rather badly; and Christianity is attacked because it did not pay Goldsmith's milk score."

Our Japanese friend may be exaggerating; but his position is after all fairly tenable. It may at least be looked at, before entering on the following brief *résumé* of the leading facts in Goldsmith's life, if only to restore our equanimity. For, naturally, it is not pleasant to think that any previous generation, however neglectful of the claims of literary persons (as compared with the claims of such wretched creatures as physicians, men of science, artists, engineers, and so forth) should so cruelly have ill-treated one whom we all love now.

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The calculation is Lord Macaulay's: see his *Biographical Essays*.

This inheritance of ingratitude is more than we can bear. Is it true that Goldsmith was so harshly dealt with by those barbarian ancestors of ours?

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## CHAPTER II.

### SCHOOL AND COLLEGE.

THE Goldsmiths were of English descent; Goldsmith's father was a Protestant clergyman in a poor little village in the county of Longford; and when Oliver, one of several children, was born in this village of Pallas, or Pallasmore, on the 10th November, 1728, the Rev. Charles Goldsmith was passing rich on £40 a year. But a couple of years later Mr. Goldsmith succeeded to a more lucrative living; and forthwith removed his family to the village of Lissoy, in the county of Westmeath.

Here at once our interest in the story begins: is this Lissoy the sweet Auburn that we have known and loved since our childhood? Lord Macaulay, with a great deal of vehemence, avers that it is not; that there never was any such hamlet as Auburn in Ireland; that *The Deserted Village* is a hopelessly incongruous poem; and that Goldsmith, in combining a description of a probably Kentish village with a description of an Irish ejectment, "has produced something which never was, and never will be, seen in any part of the world." This criticism is ingenious and plausible, but it is unsound, for it happens to overlook one of the radical facts of human nature—the magnifying delight of the mind in what is long remembered and remote. What was it that the imagination of Goldsmith in his life-long banishment, could not see when he looked back to the

home of his childhood, and his early friends, and the sports and occupations of his youth; Lissoy was no doubt a poor enough Irish village; and perhaps the farms were not too well cultivated; and perhaps the village preacher, who was so dear to all the country round, had to administer many a thrashing to a certain graceless son of his; and perhaps Paddy Byrne was something of a pedant; and no doubt pigs ran over the "nicely sanded floor" of the inn; and no doubt the village statesmen occasionally indulged in a free fight. But do you think that was the Lissoy that Goldsmith thought of in his dreary lodgings in Fleet-Street courts? No. It was the Lissoy where the vagrant lad had first seen the "primrose peep beneath the thorn;" where he had listened to the mysterious call of the bittern by the unfrequented river; it was a Lissoy still ringing with the glad laughter of young people in the twilight hours; it was a Lissoy for ever beautiful, and tender, and far away. The grown-up Goldsmith had not to go to any Kentish village for a model; the familiar scenes of his youth, regarded with all the wistfulness and longing of an exile, became glorified enough. "If I go to the opera where Signora Colomba pours out all the mazes of melody," he writes to Mr. Hodson, "I sit and sigh for Lissoy's fire-side, and *Johnny Armstrong's Last Good Night* from Peggy Golden."

There was but little in the circumstances of Goldsmith's early life likely to fit him for, or to lead him into, a literary career; in fact, he did not take to literature until he had tried pretty nearly everything else as a method of earning a living. If he was intended for anything, it was no doubt his father's wish that he should enter the Church; and he got such education as the poor Irish clergyman—who was not a very provident person—could afford. The child Goldsmith was first of all taught his alphabet at home, by a maid-servant, who was also a relation of the family; then, at the age of six, he was sent to that village school which, with its profound and learned master,

he has made familiar to all of us ; and after that he was sent further a-field for his learning, being moved from this to the other boarding-school as the occasion demanded. Goldsmith's school-life could not have been altogether a pleasant time for him. We hear, indeed, of his being concerned in a good many frolics—robbing orchards, and the like ; and it is said that he attained proficiency in the game of fives. But a shy and sensitive lad like Goldsmith, who was eagerly desirous of being thought well of, and whose appearance only invited the thoughtless but cruel ridicule of his schoolmates, must have suffered a good deal. He was little, pitted with the small-pox, and awkward ; and (the schoolboys are amazingly frank. He was not strong enough to thrash them into respect of him ; he had no big brother to become his champion ; his pocket-money was not lavish enough to enable him to buy over enemies or subsidise allies.

In similar circumstance it has sometimes happened that a boy physically inferior to his companions has consoled himself by proving his mental <sup>power</sup> prowess—has scored off his failure at cricket by the taking of prizes, and has revenged himself for a drubbing by writing a lampoon. But even this last resource was not open to Goldsmith. He was a dull boy ; “a stupid, heavy blockhead,” is Dr. Streaun's phrase in summing up the estimate formed of young Goldsmith by his contemporaries at school. Of course, as soon as he became famous, everybody began to hunt up recollections of his having said or done this or that, in order to prove that there were signs of the coming greatness. People began to remember that he had been suspected of scribbling verses, which he burned. What schoolboy has not done the like ? We know how the biographers of great painters point out to us that their hero early showed the bent of his mind by drawing the figures of animals on doors and walls with a piece of chalk ; as to which it may be observed that, if every schoolboy who scribbled verses and sketched in

chalk on a brick wall, were (to grow up) a genius, poems and pictures would be plentiful enough. However, there is the apparently authenticated anecdote of young Goldsmith's turning the tables on the fiddler at his uncle's dancing-party. The fiddler, struck by the odd look of the boy who was capering about the room, called out "Æsop!" whereupon Goldsmith is said to have instantly replied,

"Our herald hath proclaimed this saying,  
See Æsop dancing and his monkey playing!"

But even if this story be true, it is worth nothing as an augury; for quickness of repartee was precisely the accomplishment which the adult Goldsmith conspicuously lacked. Put a pen into his hand, and shut him in a room; then he was master of the situation—nothing could be more incisive, polished, and easy than his playful sarcasm. But in society any fool could get the better of him by a sudden question followed by a horse-laugh. All through his life—even after he had become one of the most famous of living writers—Goldsmith suffered from want of self-confidence. He was too anxious to please. In his eager acquiescence, he would blunder into any trap that was laid for him. A grain or two of the stolid self-sufficiency of the blockheads who laughed at him would not only have improved his character, but would have considerable added to the happiness of his life.

As a natural consequence of this timidity, Goldsmith, when opportunity served, assumed airs of magnificent importance. Every one knows the story of the mistake on which *She Stoops to Conquer* is founded. Getting free at last from all the turmoil, and anxieties, and mortifications of school-life, and returning home on a lent hack, the released schoolboy is feeling very grand indeed. He is now sixteen, would fain pass for a man, and has a whole golden guinea in his pocket. And so he takes the journey very leisurely until, getting benighted in a



certain village, he asks the way to the "best house," and is directed by a facetious person to the house of the squire. The squire by good luck falls in with the joke; and then we have a very pretty comedy indeed—the impecunious schoolboy playing the part of a fine gentleman on the strength of his solitary guinea, ordering a bottle of wine after his supper, and inviting his landlord and his landlord's wife and daughter to join him in the supper-room. The contrast, in *She Stoops to Conquer*, between Marlow's embarrassed diffidence on certain occasions and his audacious <sup>confidence</sup> effrontery on others, found many a parallel in the incidents of Goldsmith's own life; and it is not improbable that the writer of the comedy was thinking of some of his own experiences, when he made Miss Hardcastle say to her timid suitor: "A want of courage upon some occasions assumes the appearance of ignorance, and betrays us when we most want to excel."

It was, perhaps, just as well that the supper, and bottle of wine, and lodging at Squire Featherston's had not to be paid for out of the schoolboy's guinea; for young Goldsmith was now on his way to college, and the funds at the disposal of the Goldsmith family were not over abundant. Goldsmith's sister having married the son of a well-to-do man, her father considered it a point of honour that she should have a dowry; and in giving her a sum of £400 he so crippled the means of the family, that Goldsmith had to be sent to college not as a pensioner but as a sizar. It appears that the young gentleman's pride revolted against this proposal; and that he was won over to consent only by the persuasion of his uncle Contarine, who himself had been a sizar. So Goldsmith, now in his eighteenth year, went to Dublin; managed somehow or other—though he was the last in the list—to pass the necessary examination; and entered upon his college career (1745).

How he lived, and what he learned, at Trinity College, are both largely matters of conjecture; the chief features of such

record as we have are the various means of raising a little money to which the poor sizar had to resort; a continual quarrelling with his tutor, an ill-conditioned brute, who baited Goldsmith and occasionally beat him; and a chance frolic when funds were forthcoming. It was while he was at Trinity College that his father died; so that Goldsmith was rendered more than ever dependent on the kindness of his uncle Conarine, who throughout seems to have taken much interest in his odd, ungainly nephew. A loan from a friend or a visit to the pawnbroker tided over the severer difficulties; and then from time to time the writing of street-ballads, for which he got five shillings a-piece at a certain repository, came in to help. It was a happy-go-lucky, hand-to-mouth sort of existence, involving a good deal of hardship and humiliation, but having its frolics and gaieties notwithstanding. One of these was pretty near to putting an end to his collegiate career altogether. He had, smarting under a public admonition for having been concerned in a riot, taken seriously to his studies and had competed for a scholarship. He missed the scholarship, but gained an exhibition of the value of thirty shillings; whereupon he collected a number of friends of both sexes in his rooms, and proceeded to have high jinks there. In the midst of the dancing and uproar, in comes his tutor, in such a passion that he knocks Goldsmith down. This insult, received before his friends, was too much for the unlucky sizar, who, the very next day, sold his books, ran away from college, and ultimately, after having been on the verge of starvation once or twice, made his way to Lissoy. Here his brother got hold of him; persuaded him to go back; and the escapade was condoned somehow. Goldsmith remained at Trinity College until he took his degree (1749). He was again lowest in the list; but still he had passed; and he must have learned something. He was now twenty-one, with all the world before him; and the question was as to how he was to employ such knowledge as he had acquired.

## CHAPTER III.

## IDLENESS, AND FOREIGN TRAVEL.

BUT Goldsmith was not in any hurry to acquire either wealth or fame. He had a happy knack of enjoying the present hour—especially when there were one or two boon companions with him, and a pack of cards to be found; and, after his return to his mother's house, he appears to have entered upon the business of idleness with much philosophical satisfaction. If he was not quite such an unlettered clown as he has described in Tony Lumpkin, he had at least all Tony Lumpkin's high spirits and love of joking and idling; and he was surrounded at the ale-house by just such a company of admirers as used to meet at the famous Three Pigeons. Sometimes he helped in his brother's school; sometimes he went errands for his mother; occasionally he would sit and meditatively play the flute—for the day was to be passed somehow; then in the evening came the assemblage in Conway's inn, with the glass, and the pipe, and the cards, and the uproarious jest or song. "But Scripture saith an ending to all fine things must be," and the friends of this jovial young "buckeen" began to tire of his idleness and his recurrent visits. They gave him hints that he might set about doing something to provide himself with a living; and the first thing they thought of was that he should go into the Church—perhaps as a sort of purification-house after George Conway's inn. Accordingly Goldsmith, who appears to have been a most good-natured and compliant youth, did make application to the Bishop of Elphin. There is some doubt about the precise reasons which induced the Bishop to decline Goldsmith's application, but at any rate the Church was denied the aid of the young man's eloquence and erudition.

Then he tried teaching, and through the good offices of his uncle he obtained a tutorship which he held for a considerable time—long enough, indeed, to enable him to amass a sum of thirty pounds. When he quarrelled with his patron, and once more “took the world for his pillow,” as the Gaelic stories say, he had this sum in his pocket and was possessed of a good horse.

He started away from Ballymahon, where his mother was now living, with some vague notion of making his fortune as casual circumstance might direct. The expedition came to a premature end; and he returned without the money, and on the back of a wretched animal, telling his mother a cock-and-bull story of the most amusing simplicity. “If Uncle Contarine believed those letters,” says Mr. Thackeray, “—— if Oliver’s mother believed that story which the youth related of his going to Cork, with the purpose of embarking for America; of his having paid his passage money, and having sent his kit on board; of the anonymous captain sailing away with Oliver’s valuable luggage, in a nameless ship, never to return; if Uncle Contarine and the mother at Ballymahon believed his stories, they must have been a very simple pair; as it was a very simple rogue indeed who cheated them. Indeed, if any one is anxious to fill up this hiatus in Goldsmith’s life, the best thing he can do is to discard Goldsmith’s suspicious record of his adventures, and put in its place the faithful record of the adventures of Mr. Barry Lyndon, when that modest youth left his mother’s house and rode to Dublin, with a certain number of guineas in his pocket. But whether Uncle Contarine believed the story or no, he was ready to give the young gentleman another chance; and this time it was the legal profession that was chosen. Goldsmith got fifty pounds from his uncle, and reached Dublin. In a remarkably brief space of time he had gambled away the fifty pounds, and was on his way back to Ballymahon, where his mother’s reception of him

was not very cordial, though his uncle forgave him, and was once more ready to start him in life. But in what direction? Teaching, the Church, and the law had lost their attractions for him. Well, this time it was medicine. In fact, any sort of project was capable of drawing forth the good old uncle's bounty. The funds were again forthcoming; Goldsmith started for Edinburgh, and now (1752) saw Ireland for the last time.

He lived, and he informed his uncle that he studied in Edinburgh for a year and a half; at the end of which time it appeared to him that his knowledge of medicine would be much improved by foreign travel. There was Albinus, for example, "the great professor of Leyden," as he wrote to the credulous uncle, from whom he would doubtless learn much. When, having got another twenty pounds for travelling expenses, he did reach Leyden (1754), he mentioned Gaubius, the chemical professor. Gaubius is also a good name. That his intercourse with these learned persons, and the serious nature of his studies, were not incompatible with a little light relaxation in the way of gambling is not impossible. On one occasion, it is said, he was so lucky that he came to a fellow-student with his pockets full of money; and was induced to resolve never to play again—a resolution broken about as soon as made. Of course he lost all his winnings, and more; and had to borrow a trifling sum to get himself out of the place. Then an incident occurs which is highly characteristic of the better side of Goldsmith's nature. He had just got this money, and was about to leave Leyden, when, as Mr. Forster writes, "he passed a florist's garden on his return, and seeing some rare and high-priced flower, which his uncle Contarine, an enthusiast of such things, had often spoken and been in search of, he ran in without other thought than of immediate pleasure to his kindest friend, bought a parcel of the roots, and sent them off to Ireland." He had a guinea in his pocket when he started on the grand tour.

Of this notable period in Goldsmith's life (1755-6) very little is known, though a good deal has been guessed. A minute record of all the personal adventures that befell the wayfarer as he trudged from country to country, a diary of the odd humours and fancies that must have occurred to him in his solitary pilgrimages, would be of quite inestimable value; but even the letters that Goldsmith wrote home from time to time are lost; while *The Traveller* consists chiefly of a series of philosophical reflections on the government of various states, more likely to have engaged the attention of a Fleet-street author, living in an atmosphere of books, than to have occupied the mind of a tramp anxious about his supper and his night's lodging. Boswell says he "disputed" his way through Europe. It is much more probable that he begged his way through Europe. The romantic version, which has been made the subject of many a charming picture, is that he was entertained by the peasantry whom he had delighted with his playing on the flute. It is quite probable that Goldsmith, whose imagination had been captivated by the story of how Baron von Holberg had as a young man really passed through France, Germany, and Holland in this Orpheus-like manner, may have put a flute in his pocket when he left Leyden; but it is far from safe to assume, as is generally done, that Goldsmith was himself the hero of the adventures described in Chapter xx. of the *Vicar of Wakefield*. It is the more to be regretted that we have no authentic record of these devious wanderings, that by this time Goldsmith had acquired, as is shown in other letters, a polished, easy, and graceful style, with a very considerable faculty of humorous observation. Those ingenious letters to his uncle (they usually included a little hint about money) were, in fact, a trifle too literary both in substance and in form; we could even now, looking at them with a pardonable curiosity, have spared a little of their formal antithesis for some more precise information about the writer and his surroundings.

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The strangest thing about this strange journey all over Europe was the failure of Goldsmith to pick up even a common and ordinary acquaintance with the familiar facts of natural history. The ignorance on this point of the author of the *Animated Nature* was a constant subject of jest among Goldsmith's friends. They declared he could not tell the difference between any two sorts of barndoor fowl until he saw them cooked and on the table. But it may be said prematurely here that, even when he is wrong as to his facts or his sweeping generalisations, one is inclined to forgive him on account of the quaint gracefulness and point of his style. When Mr. Burchell says, "This rule seems to extend even to other animals; the little vermin race are ever treacherous, cruel, and cowardly, whilst those endowed with strength and power are generous, brave, and gentle," we scarcely stop to reflect that the merlin, which is not much bigger than a thrush, has an extraordinary courage and spirit, while the lion, if all stories be true, is unless when goaded by hunger, an abject skulker. Elsewhere, indeed, in the *Animated Nature*, Goldsmith gives credit to the smaller birds for a good deal of valour, and then goes on to say, with a charming freedom,—"But their contentions are sometimes of a gentler nature. Two male birds shall strive in song till, after a long struggle, the loudest shall entirely silence the other. During these contentions the female sits an attentive silent auditor, and often rewards the loudest songster with her company during the season." Yet even this description of the battle of the bards, with the queen of love as arbiter, is scarcely so amusing as his happy-go-lucky notions with regard to the variability of species. The philosopher, flute in hand, who went wandering from the canals of Holland to the ice-ribbed falls of the Rhine, may have heard from time to time that contest between singing-birds which he so imaginatively describes; but it was clearly the Fleet-Street author, living among books, who arrived at the conclusion that intermarriage

of species is common among small birds and rare among big birds. Quoting some lines of Addison's which express the belief that birds are a virtuous race—that the nightingale, for example, does not covet the wife of his neighbour, the black-bird—Goldsmith goes on to observe,—“But whatever may be the poet's opinion, the probability is against this fidelity among the smaller tenants of the grove. The great birds are much more true to their species than these; and, of consequence, the varieties among them are more few. Of the ostrich, the cassowary, and the eagle, there are but few species; and no arts that man can use could probably induce them to mix with each other.”

What he did bring back from his foreign travels was a medical degree. Where he got it, and how he got it, are alike matters of pure conjecture; but it is extremely improbable that—whatever he might have been willing to write home from Padua or Louvain, in order to coax another remittance from his Irish friends—he would afterwards, in the presence of such men as Johnson, Burke, and Reynolds, wear sham honours. It is much more probable that, on his finding those supplies from Ireland running ominously short, the philosophic vagabond determined to prove to his correspondents that he was really at work somewhere, instead of merely idling away his time, begging or borrowing the wherewithal to pass him from town to town. That he did see something of the foreign universities is evident from his own writings; they are touches of description here and there which he could not well have got from books. With this degree, and with such book-learning and such knowledge of nature and human nature as he had chosen or managed to pick up during all those years, he was now called upon to begin life for himself. The Irish supplies stopped altogether. His letters were left unanswered. And so Goldsmith somehow or other got back to London (February 1, 1756), and had to cast about for some way of earning his daily bread.



## CHAPTER IV.

## EARLY STRUGGLES.—HACK-WRITING.

HERE ensued a very dark period in his life. He was alone in London, without friends, without money, without introductions; his appearance was the reverse of prepossessing; and, even despite that medical degree and his acquaintance with the learned Albinus and the learned Gaubius, he had practically nothing of any value to offer for sale in the great labour-market of the world. How he managed to live at all is a mystery: it is certain that he must have endured a great deal of want; and one may well sympathise with so gentle and sensitive a creature reduced to such straits, without inquiring too curiously into the causes of his misfortunes. If, on the one hand, we cannot accuse society, or Christianity, or the English government of injustice and cruelty because Goldsmith had gambled away his chances and was now called on to pay the penalty, on the other hand, we had better, before blaming Goldsmith himself, inquire into the origin of those defects of character which produced such results. As this would involve an *excursus* into the controversy between Necessity and Free-will, probably most people would rather leave it alone. It may safely be said in any case that, while Goldsmith's faults and follies, of which he himself had to suffer the consequences, are patent enough, his character on the whole was distinctly a lovable one. Goldsmith was his own enemy, and everybody else's friend; that is not a serious indictment, as things go. He was quite well aware of his weaknesses; and he was also—it may be hinted—aware of the good-nature which he put forward as condonation. If some foreigner were to ask how it is that so thoroughly a commercial people as the English are—

strict in the acknowledgment and payment of debt—should have always betrayed a sneaking fondness for the character of the good-humoured scapegrace whose hand is in everybody's pocket, and who throws away other people's money with the most charming air in the world, Goldsmith might be pointed to as one of many literary teachers whose own circumstances were not likely to make them severe censors of the Charles Surfaces, or lenient judges of the Joseph Surfaces of the world. Be merry while you may; let to-morrow take care of itself: share your last guinea with any one, even if the poor drones of society—the butcher, and baker, and milkman with his score—have to suffer; do anything you like, so long as you keep the heart warm. All this is a delightful philosophy. It has its moments of misery—its periods of reaction—but it has its moments of high delight. When we are invited to contemplate the “evil destinies of men of letters,” we ought to be shown the flood-tides as well as the ebb-tides. The tavern gaiety; the brand new coat and lace and sword; the midnight frolics, with jolly companions every one—these, however brief and intermittent, should not be wholly left out of the picture. Of course it is very dreadful to hear of poor Boyse lying in bed with nothing but a blanket over him, and with his arms thrust through two holes in the blanket, so that he could write—perhaps a continuation of his poem on the *Deity*. But then we should be shown Boyse when he was spending the money collected by Dr. Johnson to get the poor scribbler's clothes out of pawn; and we should also be shown him, with his hands through the holes in the blanket, enjoying the mushrooms and truffles on which, as a little garniture for “his last scrap of beef,” he had just laid out his last half-guinea.

There were but few truffles—probably there was but little beef—for Goldsmith during this sombre period. “His threadbare coat, his uncouth figure, and Hibernian dialect caused

him to meet with repeated refusals." But at length he got some employment in a chemist's shop, and this was a start. Then he tried practising in a small way on his own account in Southwark. Here he made the acquaintance of a printer's workman; and through him he was engaged as corrector of the press in the establishment of Mr. Samuel Richardson. Being so near to literature, he caught the infection; and naturally began with a tragedy. This tragedy was shown to the author of *Clarissa Harlowe*; but it only went the way of many similar first inspirings of the Muse. Then Goldsmith drifted to Peckham, where we find him (1757) installed as usher at Dr. Milner's school. Goldsmith as usher has been the object of much sympathy; and he would certainly deserve it, if we are to assume that his description of an usher's position in the *Bee*, and in George Primrose's advice to his cousin, was a full and accurate description of his life at Peckham. "Browbeat by the master, hated for my ugly face by the mistress, worried by the boys"—if that was his life, he was much to be pitied. But we cannot believe it. The Milners were exceedingly kind to Goldsmith. It was at the intercession of young Milner, who had been his fellow student at Edinburgh, that Goldsmith got the situation, which at all events kept him out of the reach of immediate want. It was through the Milners that he was introduced to Griffiths, who gave him a chance of trying a literary career—as a hack-writer of reviews and so forth. When, having got tired of that, Goldsmith was again floating vaguely on the waves of chance, where did he find a harbour but in that very school at Peckham? And we have the direct testimony of the youngest of Dr. Milner's daughters, that this Irish usher of theirs was a remarkably cheerful, and even facetious person, constantly playing tricks and practical jokes, amusing the boys by telling stories and by performances on the flute, living a careless life, and always in advance of his salary. Any beggars, or group

of children, even the very boys who played back practical jokes on him, were welcome to a share of what small funds he had ; and we all know how Mrs. Milner goodnaturedly said one day, "You had better, Mr. Goldsmith, let me keep your money for you, as I do for some of the young gentlemen ;" and how he answered with much simplicity, "In truth, Madam, there is equal need." With Goldsmith's love of approbation and extreme sensitiveness he no doubt suffered deeply from many slights, now as at other times ; but what we know of his life in the Peckham school does not incline us to believe that it was an especially miserable period of his existence. His abundant cheerfulness does not seem to have at any time deserted him ; and what with tricks, and jokes, and playing of the flute, the dull routine of instructing the unruly young gentlemen at Dr. Milner's was got through somehow.

When Goldsmith left the Peckham school to try hack-writing in Paternoster Row, he was going further to fare worse. Griffiths the bookseller, when he met Goldsmith at Dr. Milner's dinner table and invited him to become a reviewer, was doing a service to the English nation—for it was in this period of machine-work that Goldsmith discovered that happy faculty of literary expression that led to the composition of his masterpieces—but he was doing little immediate service to Goldsmith.

The newly-captured hack was boarded and lodged at Griffiths' house in Paternoster Row (1757) ; he was to have a small salary in consideration of remorselessly constant work ; and—what was the hardest condition of all—he was to have his writings revised by Mrs. Griffiths. Mr. Forster justly remarks that though at last Goldsmith had thus become a man-of-letters, he "had gratified no passion and attained no object of ambition." He had taken to literature, as so many others have done, merely as a last resource. And if it is true that literature at first treated Goldsmith harshly, made him work

hard, and gave him comparatively little for what he did, at least it must be said that his experience was not a singular one. Mr. Forster says that literature was at that time in a transition state: "The patron was gone, and the public had not come." But when Goldsmith began to do better than hack-work, he found a public speedily enough. If, as Lord Macaulay computes, Goldsmith received in the last seven years of his life what was equivalent to £5,600 of our money, even the villain booksellers cannot be accused of having starved him. At the outset of his literary career he received no large sums, for he had achieved no reputation; but he got the market-rate for his work. We have around us at this moment plenty of hacks who do not earn much more than their board and lodging with a small salary.

For the rest, we have no means of knowing whether Goldsmith got through his work with ease or with difficulty; but it is obvious, looking over the reviews which he is believed to have written for Griffiths' magazine, that he readily acquired the professional critic's airs of superiority, along with a few tricks of the trade, no doubt taught him by Griffiths. Several of these reviews, for example, are merely epitomes of the contents of the books reviewed, with some vague suggestion that the writer might, if he had been less careful, have done worse, and, if he had been more careful, might have done better. Who does not remember how the philosophic vagabond was taught to become a cognoscento? "The whole secret consisted in a strict adherence to two rules: the one always to observe that the picture might have been better if the painter had taken more pains; and the other to praise the works of Pietro Perugino." It is amusing to observe the different estimates formed of the function of criticism by Goldsmith the critic, and by Goldsmith the author. Goldsmith, sitting at Griffith's desk, naturally magnifies his office, and announces his opinion that "to direct our taste, and conduct the poet up to

perfection, has ever been the true critic's province." But Goldsmith the author, when he comes to inquire into the existing state of Polite Learning in Europe, finds in criticism not a help but a danger. It is "the natural destroyer of polite learning." And again, in the *Citizen of the World*, he exclaims against the pretensions of the critic. "If any choose to be critics, it is but saying they are critics; and from that time forward they become invested with full power and authority over every caitiff who aims at their instruction or entertainment."

This at least may be said, that in these early essays contributed to the *Monthly Review* there is much more of Goldsmith the critic than of Goldsmith the author. They are somewhat laboured performances. They are almost devoid of the sly and delicate humour that afterwards marked Goldsmith's best prose work. We find throughout his trick of antithesis; but here it is forced and formal, whereas afterwards he lent to this habit of writing the subtle surprise of epigram. They have the true manner of authority, nevertheless. He says of Home's *Douglas*—"Those parts of nature, and that rural simplicity with which the author was, perhaps, best acquainted, are not unhappily described; and hence we are led to conjecture, that a more universal knowledge of nature will probably increase his powers of description." If the author had written otherwise, he would have written differently; had he known more, he would not have been so ignorant; the tragedy is a tragedy, but why did not the author make it a comedy?—this sort of criticism has been heard of even in our own day. However, Goldsmith pounded away at his newly-found work, under the eye of the exacting bookseller and his learned wife. We find him dealing with Scandinavian (here called Celtic) mythology, though he does not adventure on much comment of his own; then he engages Smollett's *History of England*, but mostly in the way

of extract; anon we find him reviewing *A Journal of Eight Days' Journey*, by Jonas Hanway, of whom Johnson said that he made some reputation by travelling abroad, and lost it all by travelling at home. Then again we find him writing a disquisition on *Some Enquiries concerning the First Inhabitants, Language, Religion, Learning, and Letters of Europe*, by a Mr. Wise, who, along with his critic, appears to have got into hopeless confusion in believing Basque and Armorican to be the remains of the same ancient language. The last phrase of a note appended to this review by Goldsmith probably indicates his own humble estimate of his work at this time. "It is more our business," he says, "to exhibit the opinions of the learned than to controvert them." In fact he was employed to boil down books for people who did not wish to spend more on literature than the price of a magazine. Though he was new to the trade, it is probable he did it as well as any other.

At the end of five months, Goldsmith and Griffiths quarrelled and separated. Griffiths said Goldsmith was idle; Goldsmith said Griffiths was impertinent; probably the editorial supervision exercised by Mrs. Griffiths had something to do with the dire contention. From Paternoster Row Goldsmith removed to a garret in Fleet Street; had his letters addressed to a coffee-house; and apparently supported himself by further hack-work, his connection with Griffiths not being quite severed. Then he drifted back to Peckham again; and was once more installed as usher, Dr. Milner being in especial want of an assistant at this time. Goldsmith's lingering about the gates of literature had not inspired him with any great ambition to enter the enchanted land. But at the same time he thought he saw in literature a means by which a little ready money might be made, in order to help him on to something more definite and substantial; and this goal was now put before him by Dr. Milner, in the shape of a medical appointment on the Coromandel coast. It was in the hope of obtaining this

appointment, that he set about composing that *Enquiry into the Present State of Polite Learning in Europe*, which is now interesting to us as the first of his more ambitious works. As the book grew under his hands, he began to cast about for subscribers; and from the Fleet-Street coffee-house—he had again left the Peckham school—he addressed to his friends and relatives a series of letters of the most charming humour, which might have drawn subscriptions from a millstone. To his brother-in-law, Mr. Hodson, he sent a glowing account of the great fortune in store for him on the Coromandel coast. “The salary is but trifling,” he writes, “namely £100 per annum, but the other advantages, if a person be prudent, are considerable. The practice of the place, if I am rightly informed, generally amounts to not less than £1,000 per annum, for which the appointed physician has an exclusive privilege. This, with the advantages resulting from trade, and the high interest which money bears, viz., £20 per cent., are the inducements which persuade me to undergo the fatigues of sea, the dangers of war, and the still greater dangers of the climate; which induce me to leave a place where I am every day gaining friends and esteem, and where I might enjoy all the conveniences of life.”

The surprising part of this episode in Goldsmith's life is that he did really receive the appointment; in fact he was called upon to pay £10 for the appointment-warrant. In this emergency he went to the proprietor of the *Critical Review*, the rival of the *Monthly*, and obtained some money for certain anonymous work which need not be mentioned in detail here. He also moved into another garret, this time in Green-Arbour Court, Fleet Street, in a wilderness of slums. The Coromandel project, however, on which so many hopes had been built, fell through. No explanation of the collapse could be got from either Goldsmith himself, or from Dr. Milner. Mr. Forster suggests that Goldsmith's inability to raise money for his outfit



may have been made the excuse for transferring the appointment to another ; and that is probable enough ; but it is also probable that the need for such an excuse was based on the discovery that Goldsmith was not properly qualified for the post. And this seems the more likely, that Goldsmith immediately afterwards resolved to challenge examination at Surgeons' Hall. He undertook to write four articles for the *Monthly Review* ; Griffiths became surety to a tailor for a fine suit of clothes : and thus equipped, Goldsmith presented himself at Surgeon's Hall. He only wanted to be passed as hospital mate ; but even that modest ambition was unfulfilled. He was found not qualified ; and returned, with his fine clothes, to his Fleet-Street den. He was now thirty years of age (1758) ; and had found no definite occupation in the world.

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## CHAPTER V.

### BEGINNING OF AUTHORSHIP.—THE BEE.

DURING the period that now ensued, and amid much quarrelling with Griffiths and hack-writing for the *Critical Review*, Goldsmith managed to get his *Enquiry into the Present State of Polite Learning in Europe* completed ; and it is from the publication of that work, on the 2nd of April, 1759, that we may date the beginning of Goldsmith's career as an author. The book was published anonymously ; but Goldsmith was not at all anxious to disclaim the parentage of his first-born ; and in Grub Street and its environs, at least, the authorship of the book was no secret. Moreover there was that in it which was likely to provoke the literary tribe to plenty of fierce talking.

The *Enquiry* is neither more nor less than an endeavour to prove that criticism has in all ages been the deadly enemy of art and literature ; coupled with an appeal to authors to draw their inspiration from nature rather than from books, and varied here and there by a gentle sigh over the loss of that patronage, in the sunshine of which men of genius were wont to bask. Goldsmith, not having been an author himself, could not have suffered much at the hands of the critics ; so that it is not to be supposed that personal feeling dictated this fierce onslaught on the whole tribe of critics, compilers, and commentators. They are represented to us as rank weeds, growing up to choke all manifestations of true art. "Ancient learning," we are told at the outset, "may be distinguished into three periods : its commencement, or the age of poets ; its maturity, or the age of philosophers ; and its decline, or the age of critics." Then our guide carries us into the dark ages ; and, with lantern in hand, shows us the creatures swarming there in the sluggish pools—"commentators, compilers, polemic divines, and intricate metaphysicians." We come to Italy : look at the affectations with which the Virtuosi and Filosofi have enchained the free spirit of poetry." "Poetry is no longer among them an imitation of what we see, but of what a visionary might wish. The zephyr breathes the most exquisite perfume ; the trees wear eternal verdure ; fawns, and dryads, and hamadryads, stand ready to fan the sultry shepherdess, who has forgot, indeed, the prettiness with which Geminì's shepherdesses have been reproached, but is so simple and innocent as often to have no meaning. Happy country, where the pastoral age begins to revive!—where the wits even of Rome are united into a rural group of nymphs and swains, under the appellation of modern Arcadians!—where in the midst of porticoes, processions, cavalcades, abbés turned shepherds and shepherdesses without sheep indulge their innocent *divertimenti*!"

In Germany the ponderous volumes of the commentators next come in for animadversion ; and here we find an epigram, the quaint simplicity of which is peculiarly characteristic of Goldsmith. " Were angels to write books," he remarks, " they never would write folios." But Germany gets credit for the money spent by her potentates on learned institutions ; and it is perhaps England that is delicately hinted at in these words : " Had the fourth part of the immense sum above-mentioned been given in proper rewards to genius, in some neighbouring countries, it would have rendered the name of the donor immortal, and added to the real interests of society." Indeed, when we come to England, we find that men of letters are in a bad way, owing to the prevalence of critics, the tyranny of booksellers, and the absence of patrons. " The author, when unpatronized by the great, has naturally recourse to the bookseller. There cannot perhaps be imagined a combination more prejudicial to taste than this. It is the interest of the one to allow as little for writing, and of the other to write as much as possible. Accordingly, tedious compilations and periodical magazines are the result of their joint endeavours. In these circumstances the author bids adieu to fame, writes for bread, and for that only. Imagination is seldom called in. He sits down to address the venal muse with the most phlegmatic apathy ; and, as we are told of the Russian, courts his mistress by falling asleep in her lap. His reputation never spreads in a wider circle than that of the trade, who generally value him, not for the fineness of his compositions, but the quantity he works off in a given time.

" A long habit of writing for bread thus turns the ambition of every author at last into avarice. He finds that he has written many years, that the public are scarcely acquainted even with his name ; he despairs of applause, and turns to profit, which invites him. He finds that money procures all those advantages, that respect, and that ease which he vainly

expected from fame. Thus the man who, under the protection of the great, might have done honour to humanity, when only patronized by the bookseller, becomes a thing little superior to the fellow who works at the press."

Nor was he afraid to attack the critics of his own day, though he knew that the two Reviews for which he had recently been writing would have something to say about his own *Enquiry*. This is how he disposes of the *Critical* and the *Monthly*:—"We have two literary Reviews in London, with critical newspapers and magazines without number. The compilers of these resemble the commoners of Rome; they are all for levelling property, not by increasing their own, but by diminishing that of others. The man who has any good-nature in his disposition must, however, be somewhat displeased to see distinguished reputations often the sport of ignorance,—to see, by one false pleasantry, the future peace of a worthy man's life disturbed, and this only because he has unsuccessfully attempted to instruct or amuse us. Though ill-nature is far from being wit, yet it is generally laughed at as such. The critic enjoys the triumph, and ascribes to his parts what is only due to his effrontery. I fire with indignation, when I see persons wholly destitute of education and genius indent to the press, and thus turn book-makers, adding to the sin of criticism the sin of ignorance also; whose trade is a bad one, and who are bad workmen in the trade." Indeed there was a good deal of random hitting in the *Enquiry*, which was sure to provoke resentment. Why, for example, should he have gone out of his way to insult the highly respectable class of people who excel in mathematical studies? "This seems a science," he observes, "to which the meanest intellects are equal. I forget who it is that says 'All men might understand mathematics if they would.'" There was also in the first edition of the *Enquiry* a somewhat ungenerous attack on stage-managers, actors, actresses, and theatrical things in general; but this was

afterwards wisely excised. It is not to be wondered at that, on the whole, the *Enquiry* should have been severely handled in certain quarters. Smollett, who reviewed it in the *Critical Review*, appears to have kept his temper pretty well for a Scotchman; but Kenrick, a hack employed by Griffiths to maltreat the book in the *Monthly Review*, flourished his bludgeon in a brave manner. The coarse personalities and malevolent insinuations of this bully no doubt hurt Goldsmith considerably; but, as we look at them now, they are only remarkable for their dullness. If Griffiths had had another Goldsmith to reply to Goldsmith, the retort would have been better worth reading: one can imagine the playful sarcasm that would have been dealt out to this new writer, who, in the very act of protesting against criticism, proclaimed himself a critic. But Goldsmiths are not always to be had when wanted; while Kenricks can be bought at any moment for a guinea or two a head.

Goldsmith had not chosen literature as the occupation of his life; he had only fallen back on it, when other projects failed. But it is quite possible that now, as he began to take up some slight position as an author, the old ambition of distinguishing himself—which had flickered before his imagination from time to time—began to enter into his calculations along with the more pressing business of earning a livelihood. And he was soon to have an opportunity of appealing to a wider public than could have been expected for that erudite treatise on the arts of Europe. Mr. Wilkie, a bookseller in St. Paul's Church yard, proposed to start a weekly magazine, price threepence, to contain essays, short stories, letters on the topics of the day, and so forth, more or less after the manner of the *Spectator*. He asked Goldsmith to become sole contributor. Here, indeed, was a very good opening; for, although there were many magazines in the field, the public had just then a fancy for literature in small doses; while Goldsmith, in entering into

the competition, would not be hampered by the dullness of collaborateurs. He closed with Wilkie's offer; and on the 6th of October, 1759, appeared the first number of the *Bee*.

For us now there is a curious autobiographical interest in the opening sentences of the first number; but surely even the public of the day must have imagined that the new writer who was now addressing them, was not to be confounded with the common herd of magazine-hacks. What could be more delightful than this odd mixture of modesty, humour, and an anxious desire to please!—"There is not, perhaps, a more whimsically dismal figure in nature than a man of real modesty, who assumes an air of impudence—who, while his heart beats with anxiety, studies ease and affects good-humour. In this situation, however, a periodical writer often finds himself upon his first attempt to address the public in form. All his power of pleasing is damped by solicitude, and his cheerfulness dashed with apprehension. Impressed with the terrors of the tribunal before which he is going to appear, his natural humour turns to pertness, and for real wit he is obliged to substitute vivacity. His first publication draws a crowd; they part dissatisfied; and the author, never more to be indulged with a favourable hearing, is left to condemn the indelicacy of his own address or their want of discernment. For my part, as I was never distinguished for address, and have often even blundered in making my bow, such bodings as these had like to have totally repressed my ambition. I was at a loss whether to give the public specious promises, or give none; whether to be merry or sad on this solemn occasion. If I should decline all merit, it was too probable the hasty reader might have taken me at my word. If, on the other hand, like labourers in the magazine trade, I had, with modest impudence, humbly presumed to promise an epitome of all the good things that ever were said or written, this might have disgasted those readers I most desire to please. Had I been merry, I might have been cen-

sured as vastly low ; and had I been sorrowful I might have been left to mourn in solitude and silence ; in short, whichever way I turned, nothing presented but prospects of terror, despair, chandlers' shops, and waste paper."

It is just possible that if Goldsmith had kept to this vein of familiar *causerie*, the public might in time have been attracted by its quaintness. But no doubt Mr. Wilkie would have stared aghast ; and so we find Goldsmith, as soon as his introductory bow is made, setting seriously about the business of magazine-making. Very soon, however, both Mr. Wilkie and his editor perceived that the public had not been taken by their venture. The chief cause of the failure, as it appears to any one who looks over the magazine now, would seem to be the lack of any definite purpose. There was no marked feature to arrest public attention, while many things were discarded on which the popularity of other periodicals had been based. There was no scandal to appeal to the key-hole and back door element in human nature ; there were no libels and gross personalities to delight the mean and envious ; there were no fine airs of fashion to charm milliners anxious to know how the great talked, and posed, and dressed ; and there was no solemn and pompous erudition to impress the minds of those serious and sensible people who buy literature as they buy butter, by its weight. At the beginning of No. IV. he admits that the new magazine has not been a success ; and, in doing so, returns to that vein of whimsical, personal humour with which he had started : " Were I to measure the merit of my present undertaking by its success or the rapidity of its sale, I might be led to form conclusions by no means favourable to the pride of an author. Should I estimate my fame by its extent, every newspaper and magazine would leave me far behind. Their fame is diffused in a very wide circle—that of some as far as Islington, and some yet further still ; while mine, I sincerely believe, has hardly travelled beyond the

sound of Bow Bell ; and, while the works of others fly like unpinioned swans, I find my own move as heavily as a new-plucked goose. Still, however, I have as much pride as they who have ten times as many readers. It is impossible to repeat all the agreeable delusions in which a disappointed author is apt to find comfort. I conclude, that what my reputation wants in extent is made up by its solidity. *Minus juvat gloria lata quam magna.* I have great satisfaction in considering the delicacy and discernment of those readers I have, and in ascribing my want of popularity to the ignorance or inattention of those I have not. All the world may forsake an author, but vanity will never forsake him. Yet, notwithstanding so sincere a confession, I was once induced to show my indignation against the public, by discontinuing my endeavours to please ; and was bravely resolved, like Raleigh, to vex them by burning my manuscript in a passion. Upon recollection, however, I considered what set or body of people would be displeased at my rashness. The sun, after so sad an accident, might shine next morning as bright as usual ; men might laugh and sing the next day, and transact business as before, and not a single creature feel any regret but myself."

Goldsmith was certainly more at home in this sort of writing, than in gravely lecturing people against the vice of gambling ; in warning tradesmen how ill it became them to be seen at races ; in demonstrating that justice is a higher virtue than generosity ; and in proving that the avaricious are the true benefactors of society. But even as he confesses the failure of his new magazine, he seems determined to show the public what sort of writer this is, whom as yet they have not regarded too favourably. It is in No. IV. of the *Bee* that the famous *City Night Piece* occurs. No doubt that strange little fragment of description was the result of some sudden and aimless fancy, striking the occupant of the lonely garret in the middle of the night. The present tense, which he seldom used—and the abuse



of which is one of the detestable vices of modern literature—adds to the mysterious solemnity of the recital :

“The clock has just struck two, the expiring taper rises and sinks in the socket, the watchman forgets the hour in slumber, the laborious and the happy are at rest, and nothing wakes but meditation, guilt, revelry, and despair. The drunkard once more fills the destroying bowl, the robber walks his midnight round, and the suicide lifts his guilty arm against his own sacred person.

“Let me no longer waste the night over the page of antiquity or the sallies of contemporary genius, but pursue the solitary walk, where Vanity, ever changing, but a few hours past walked before me—where she kept up the pageant, and now, like a froward child—seems hushed with their own importunities.

“What a gloom hangs all around ! The dying lamp feebly emits a yellow gleam ; no sound is heard but of the chiming clock, or the distant watch-dog. All the bustle of human pride is forgotten ; an hour like this may well display the emptiness of human vanity.

“There will come a time, when this temporary solitude may be made continual, and the city itself, like its inhabitants, fade away, and leave a desert in its room.

“What cities, as great as this, have once triumphed in existence, had their victories as great, joy as just and as unbounded ; and, with short-sighted presumption, promised themselves immortality ! Posterity can hardly trace the situation of some ; the sorrowful traveller wanders over the awful ruins of others ; and, as he beholds, he learns wisdom, and feels the transience of every sublimary possession.

“‘Here,’ he cries, ‘stood their citadel, now grown over with weeds ; there their senate-house, but now the haunt of every noxious reptile ; temples and theatres stood here, now only an

undistinguished heap of ruin. They are fallen, for luxury and avarice first made them feeble. The rewards of the state were conferred on amusing, and not on useful, members of society. Their riches and opulence invited the invaders, who, though at first repulsed, returned again, conquered by perseverance, and at last swept the defendants into undistinguished destruction.' ”

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## CHAPTER VI.

### PERSONAL TRAITS.

THE foregoing extracts will sufficiently show what were the chief characteristics of Goldsmith's writing at this time—the grace and ease of style, a gentle and sometimes pathetic thoughtfulness, and, above all, when he speaks in the first person, a delightful vein of humorous self-disclosure. Moreover, these qualities, if they were not immediately profitable to the booksellers, were beginning to gain for him the recognition of some of the well-known men of the day. Percy, afterwards Bishop of Dromore, had made his way to the miserable garret of the poor author. Smollett, whose novels Goldsmith preferred to his History, was anxious to secure his services as a contributor to the forthcoming *British Magazine*. Burke had spoken of the pleasure given him by Goldsmith's review of the *Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*. But, to crown all, the great Cham himself sought out this obscure author, who had on several occasions spoken with reverence and admiration of his work; and so began what is perhaps the most interesting literary friendship

on record. At what precise date Johnson first made Goldsmith's acquaintance, is not known; Mr. Forster is right in assuming that they had met before the supper in Wine-Office Court, at which Mr. Percy was present. It is a thousand pities that Boswell had not by this time made his appearance in London. Johnson, Goldsmith, and all the rest of them are only ghosts until the pertinacious young laird of Auchinleck comes on the scene to give them colour, and life, and form. It is odd enough that the very first remarks of Goldsmith's which Boswell jotted down in his notebook, should refer to Johnson's systematic kindness towards the poor and wretched. "He had increased my admiration of the goodness of Johnson's heart by incidental remarks in the course of conversation, such as, when I mentioned Mr. Levett, whom he entertained under his roof, 'He is poor and honest, which is recommendation enough to Johnson'; and when I wondered that he was very kind to a man of whom I had heard a very bad character, 'He is now become miserable, and that ensures the protection of Johnson.'"

For the rest, Boswell was not well-disposed towards Goldsmith, whom he regarded with a jealousy equal to his admiration of Johnson; but it is probable that his description of the personal appearance of the awkward and ungainly Irishman is in the main correct. And here also it may be said that Boswell's love of truth and accuracy compelled him to make this admission: "It has been generally circulated and believed that he (Goldsmith) was a mere fool in conversation; but, in truth, this has been greatly exaggerated." On this exaggeration—seeing that the contributor to the *British Magazine* and the *Public Ledger* was now becoming better known among his fellow authors—a word or two may fitly be said here. It pleased Goldsmith's contemporaries, who were not all of them celebrated for their ready wit, to regard him as a hopeless and incurable fool, who by some strange chance could produce

literature, the merits of which he could not himself understand. To Horace Walpole we owe the phrase which describes Goldsmith as an "inspired idiot." Innumerable stories are told of Goldsmith's blunders; of his forced attempts to shine in conversation; of poor Poll talking nonsense, when all the world was wondering at the beauty of his writing. In one case we are told he was content to admit, when dictated to, that this, and not that, was what he really had meant in a particular phrase. Now there can be no question that Goldsmith, conscious of his pitted face, his brogue, and his ungainly figure, was exceedingly nervous and sensitive in society, and was anxious, as such people mostly are, to cover his shyness by an appearance of ease, if not even of swagger; and there can be as little question that he occasionally did and said very awkward and blundering things. But our Japanese friend, whom we mentioned in our opening pages, looking through the record that is preserved to us of those blunders which are supposed to be most conclusive as to this aspect of Goldsmith's character, would certainly stare. "Good heavens," he would cry, "did men ever live who were so thick-headed as not to see the humour of this or that 'blunder'; or were they so beset with the notion that Goldsmith was only a fool, that they must needs be blind?" Take one well-known instance. He goes to France with Mrs. Horneck and her two daughters, the latter very handsome young ladies. At Lille the two girls and Goldsmith are standing at the window of the hotel, overlooking the square in which are some soldiers; and naturally the beautiful young Englishwomen attract some attention. Thereupon Goldsmith turns indignantly away, remarking that elsewhere he also has his admirers. Now what surgical instrument was needed to get this harmless little joke into any sane person's head? Boswell may perhaps be pardoned for pretending to take the incident *au sérieux*; for as has just been said, in his profound adoration of Johnson, he was devoured by

jealousy of Goldsmith ; but that any other mortal should have failed to see what was meant by this little bit of humorous flattery is almost incredible. No wonder that one of the sisters afterwards referring to this "playful jest," should have expressed her astonishment at finding it put down as a proof of Goldsmith's envious disposition. But even after that disclaimer, we find Mr. Croker, as quoted by Mr. Forster, solemnly doubting "whether the vexation so seriously exhibited by Goldsmith was real or assumed"!

Of course this is an extreme case ; but there are others very similar. "He affected," says Hawkins, "Johnson's style and manner of conversation, and when he had uttered, as he often would, a laboured sentence, so tumid as to be scarce intelligible, would ask if that was not truly Johnsonian?" Is it not truly dismal to find such an utterance coming from a presumably reasonable human being? It is not to be wondered at that Goldsmith grew shy — and in some cases had to ward off the acquaintance of certain of his neighbours as being too intrusive — if he ran the risk of having his odd and grave humours so densely mistranslated. The fact is this, that Goldsmith was possessed of a very subtle quality of humour, which is at all times rare, but which is perhaps more frequently to be found in Irishmen than among other folks. It consists in the satire of the pretence and pomposities of others by means of a sort of exaggerated and playful self-depreciation. It is a most delicate and most delightful form of humour ; but it is very apt to be misconstrued by the dull. Who can doubt that Goldsmith was good-naturedly laughing at himself, his own plain face, his vanity, and his blunders, when he professed to be jealous of the admiration excited by the Miss Hornecks ; when he gravely drew attention to the splendid colours of his coat ; or when he no less gravely informed a company of his friends that he had heard a very good story, but would not repeat it, because they would be sure to miss the point of it?

This vein of playful and sarcastic self-depreciation is continually cropping up in his essay writing, as, for example, in the passage already quoted from No. IV. of the *Bee*: "I conclude, that what my reputation wants in extent, is made up by its solidity. *Minus juvat gloria lata quam magna.* I have great satisfaction in considering the delicacy and discernment of those readers I have, and in ascribing my want of popularity to the ignorance or inattention of those I have not." But here, no doubt, he remembers that he is addressing the world at large, which contains many foolish persons; and so, that the delicate raillery may not be mistaken, he immediately adds, "All the world may forsake an author, but vanity will never forsake him." That he expected a quicker apprehension on the part of his intimates and acquaintances, and that he was frequently disappointed, seems pretty clear from those very stories of his "blunders." We may reasonably suspect, at all events, that Goldsmith was not quite so much of a fool as he looked; and it is far from improbable that when the ungainly Irishman was called in to make sport for the Philistines—and there were a good many Philistines in those days, if all stories be true—and when they imagined they had put him out of countenance, he was really standing aghast, and wondering how it could have pleased Providence to create such helpless stupidity.

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## CHAPTER VII.

### THE CITIZEN OF THE WORLD.—BEAU NASH.

MEANWHILE, to return to his literary work, the *Citizen of the World* had grown out of his contributions to the *Public Ledger*, a daily newspaper started by Mr. Newbery, another

bookseller in St. Paul's Churchyard. Goldsmith was engaged to write for this paper two letters a week at a guinea a-piece; and these letters were, after a short time (1760), written in the character of a Chinese who had come to study European civilisation. It may be noted that Goldsmith had in the *Monthly Review*, in mentioning Voltaire's memoirs of French writers, quoted a passage about Montesquieu's *Lettres Persanes* as follows: "It is written in imitation of the *Siamese Letters* of Du Freny and of the *Turkish Spy*; but it is an imitation which shows what the originals should have been. The success their works met with was, for the most part, owing to the foreign air of their performances; the success of the *Persian Letters* arose from the delicacy of their satire. That satire which in the mouth of an Asiatic is poignant, would lose all its force when coming from an European." And it must certainly be said that the charm of the strictures of the *Citizen of the World* lies wholly in their delicate satire, and not at all in any foreign air which the author may have tried to lend to these performances. The disguise is very apparent. In those garrulous, vivacious, whimsical, and sometimes serious papers, Lien Chi Altangi, writing to Fum Hoam in Pekin, does not so much describe the aspects of European civilisation which would naturally surprise a Chinese, as he expresses the dissatisfaction of a European with certain phases of the civilisation visible everywhere around him. It is not a Chinaman, but a Fleet-Street author by profession, who resents the competition of noble amateurs whose works—otherwise bitter pills enough—are gilded by their titles: "A nobleman has but to take a pen, ink, and paper, write away through three large volumes, and then sign his name to the title-page; though the whole might have been before more disgusting than his own rent-roll, yet signing his name and title gives value to the deed, title being alone equivalent to taste, imagination, and genius. As soon as a piece therefore, is published, the first questions are—Who is

the author! Does he keep a coach? Where lies his estate? What sort of a table does he keep? If he happens to be poor and unqualified for such a scrutiny, he and his works sink into irremediable obscurity, and too late he finds, that having fed upon turtle is a more ready way to fame than having digested Tully. The poor devil against whom fashion has set its face vainly alleges that he has been bred in every part of Europe where knowledge was to be sold; that he has grown pale in the study of nature and himself. His works may please upon the perusal, but his pretensions to fame are entirely disregarded. He is treated like a fiddler, whose music, though liked, is not much praised, because he lives by it; while a gentleman performer, though the most wretched scraper alive, throws the audience into raptures. The fiddler, indeed, may in such a case console himself by thinking, that while the other goes off with all the praise, he runs away with all the money. But here the parallel drops; for while the nobleman triumphs in unmerited applause, the author by profession steals off with—nothing.”

At the same time it must be allowed that the utterance of these strictures through the mouth of a Chinese admits of a certain *naïveté*, which on occasion heightens the sarcasm. Lien Chi accompanies the Man in Black to a theatre to see an English play. Here is part of the performance:—“I was going to second his remarks, when my attention was engrossed by a new object; a man came in balancing a straw upon his nose, and the audience were clapping their hands in all the raptures of applause. ‘To what purpose,’ cried I, ‘does this unmeaning figure make his appearance? is he a part of the plot?’—‘Unmeaning do you call him?’ replied my friend in black; ‘this is one of the most important characters of the whole play; nothing pleases the people more than seeing a straw balanced: there is a great deal of meaning in a straw: there is something suited to every apprehension in the sight;



and a fellow possessed of talents like these is sure of making his fortune. The third act now began with an actor who came to inform us that he was the villain of the play, and intended to show strange things before all was over. He was joined by another who seemed as much disposed for mischief as he ; their intrigues continued through this whole division. 'If that be a villain,' said I, 'he must be a very stupid one to tell his secrets without being asked; such soliloquies of late are never admitted in China.' The noise of clapping interrupted me once more; a child six years old was learning to dance on the stage, which gave the ladies and mandarins infinite satisfaction. 'I am sorry,' said I, 'to see the pretty creature so early learning so bad a trade; dancing being, I presume, as contemptible here as in China.'—'Quite the reverse,' interrupted my companion; dancing is a very reputable and genteel employment here; men have a greater chance for encouragement from the merit of their heels than their heads. One who jumps up and flourishes his toes three times before he comes to the ground may have three hundred a year: he who flourishes them four times, gets four hundred; but he who arrives at five is inestimable, and may demand what salary he thinks proper. The female dancers, too, are valued for this sort of jumping and crossing; and it is a cant word amongst them, that she deserves most who shows highest. But the fourth act is begun; let us be attentive.' "

The Man in Black here mentioned is one of the notable features of this series of papers. The mysterious person whose acquaintance the Chinaman made in Westminster Abbey, and who concealed such a wonderful goodness of heart under a rough and forbidding exterior, is a charming character indeed; and it is impossible to praise too highly the vein of subtle sarcasm in which he preaches worldly wisdom. But to assume that any part of his history which he disclosed to the Chinaman was a piece of autobiographical writing on the part of Goldsmith, is a very hazardous thing. A writer of fiction must

necessarily use such materials as have come within his own experience; and Goldsmith's experience—or his use of those materials—was extremely limited: witness how often a pet fancy, like his remembrance of *Johnny Armstrong's Last Good Night*, is repeated. "That of these simple elements, writes Professor Masson, in his *Memoir of Goldsmith*, prefixed to an edition of his works, "he made so many charming combinations, really differing from each other, and all, though suggested by fact, yet hung so sweetly in an ideal air, proved what an artist he was, and was better than much that is commonly called invention. In short, if there is a sameness of effect in Goldsmith's writings, it is because they consist of poetry and truth, humour and pathos, from his own life, and the supply from such a life as his was not inexhaustible."

The question of invention is easily disposed of. Any child can invent a world transcending human experience by the simple combination of ideas which are in themselves incongruous—a world in which the horses have each five feet, in which the grass is blue and the sky green, in which seas are balanced on the peaks of mountains. The result is unbelievable and worthless. But the writer of imaginative literature uses his own experiences and the experiences of others, so that his combination of ideas in themselves compatible shall appear so natural & so believable that the reader—although these incidents and characters never did actually exist—is as much interested in them as if they had existed. The mischief of it is that the reader sometimes thinks himself very clever, and, recognising a little bit of the story as having happened to the author, jumps to the conclusion that such and such a passage is necessarily autobiographical. Hence it is that Goldsmith has been hastily identified with the Philosophic Vagabond in the *Vicar of Wakefield*, and with the Man in Black in the *Citizen of the World*. That he may have used certain experiences in the one, and that he may perhaps have given in the other a sort of fancy sketch

of a person suggested by some trait in his own character, is possible enough ; but further assertion of likeness is impossible. That the Man in Black had one of Goldsmith's little weaknesses is obvious enough : we find him just a trifle too conscious of his own kindliness of generosity. The Vicar of Wakefield himself is not without a spice of this amiable vanity. As for Goldsmith, every one must remember his reply to Griffiths' accusation : " No, sir, had I been a sharper, *had I been possessed of less good nature and native generosity*, I might surely now have been in better circumstances."

The Man in Black, in any case, is a delightful character. We detect the warm and generous nature even in his pretence of having acquired worldly wisdom : " I now therefore pursued a course of uninterrupted frugality, seldom wanted a dinner, and was consequently invited to twenty. I soon began to get the character of a saving hunk that had money, and insensibly grew into esteem. Neighbours have asked my advice in the disposal of their daughters ; and I have always taken care not to give any. I have contracted a friendship with an alderman, only by observing, that if we take a farthing from a thousand pounds it will be a thousand pounds no longer. I have been invited to a pawnbroker's table, by pretending to hate gravy ; and am now actually upon treaty of marriage with a rich widow, for only having observed that the bread was rising. If ever I am asked a question, whether I know it or not, instead of answering, I only smile and look wise. If a charity is proposed I go about with the hat, but put nothing in myself. If a wretch solicits my pity, I observe that the world is filled with impostors, and take a certain method of not being deceived by never relieving. In short, I now find the truest way of finding esteem, even from the indigent, is to give away nothing and thus have much in our power to give." This is a very clever piece of writing, whether it is in strict accordance with the character of the Man in Black, or not. But there is in

these *Public Ledger* papers another sketch of character, which is not only consistent in itself, and in every way admirable, but is of still further interest to us when we remember that at this time the various personages in the *Vicar of Wakefield* were no doubt gradually assuming definite form in Goldsmith's mind. It is in the figure of Mr. Tibbs, introduced apparently at haphazard, but at once taking possession of us by its quaint relief, that we find Goldsmith showing a firmer hand in character-drawing. With a few happy dramatic touches Mr. Tibbs starts into life; he speaks for himself; he becomes one of the people whom we know. And yet, with this concise and sharp portraiture of a human being, look at the graceful, almost garrulous, ease of the style:—

“Our pursuer soon came up and joined us with all the familiarity of an old acquaintance. ‘My dear Drybone,’ cries he, shaking my friend’s hand, ‘where have you been hiding this half a century? Positively I had fancied you were gone to cultivate matrimony and your estate in the country.’ During the reply I had an opportunity of surveying the appearance of our new companion; his hat was pinched up with peculiar smartness; his looks were pale, thin, and sharp; round his neck he wore a broad black riband, and in his bosom a buckle studded with glass; his coat was trimmed with tarnished twist; he wore by his side a sword with a black hilt; and his stockings of silk, though newly washed, were grown yellow by long service. I was so much engaged with the peculiarity of his dress, that I attended only to the latter part of my friend’s reply, in which he complimented Mr. Tibbs on the taste of his clothes and the bloom in his countenance. ‘Pshaw, pshaw, Will,’ cried the figure, ‘no more of that, if you love me: you know I hate flattery,—on my soul I do; and yet, to be sure, an intimacy with the great will improve one’s appearance, and a course of venison will fatten; and yet, faith, I despise the eat as much as you do; but there are a great many damn’d

honest fellows among them, and we must not quarrel with one half, because the other wants weeding. If they were all such as my Lord Mudler, one of the most good-natured creatures that ever squeezed a lemon, I should myself be among the number of their admirers. I was yesterday to dine at the Duchess of Piccadilly's. My lord was there. "Ned," says he "I'll hold gold to silver, I can tell you where you were poaching last night." "Poaching, my lord?" says I: "faith, you have missed already; for I staid at home and let the girls poach for me. That's my way; I take a fine woman as some animals do their prey—stand still, and, swoop, they fall into my mouth." 'Ah, Tibbs, thou art a happy fellow,' cried my companion, with looks of Infinite pity, 'I hope your fortune is as much improved as your understanding, in such company?' 'Improved!' replied the other; 'you shall know,—but let it go no farther—a great secret—five hundred a year to begin with—my lord's word of honour for it. His lordship took me down in his own chariot yesterday, and we had a *tête-à-tête* dinner in the country, where we talked of nothing else.'—'I fancy you forget, sir,' cried I; 'you told us but this moment of your dining yesterday in town.'—'Did I say so?' replied he, coolly; 'to be sure, if I said so, it was so. Dined in town! egad, now I do remember, I did dine in town; but I dined in the country too; for you must know, my boys, I ate two dinners. By the bye, I am grown as nice as the devil in my eating. I'll tell you a pleasant affair about that; we were a select party of us to dine at Lady Grogram's,—an affected piece, but let it go no farther—a secret.—Well, there happened to be no *asafœtida* in the sauce to a turkey, upon which, says I, I'll hold a thousand guineas, and say done, first, that—But, dear, Drybone, you are an honest creature; lend me half-a-crown for a minute or two, or so, just till——; but hearkee, ask me for it the next time we meet, or it may be twenty to one but I forget to pay you.'"

Returning from these performances to the author of them, we find him a busy man of letters, becoming more and more in request among the booksellers, and obtaining recognition among his fellow-writers. He had moved into better lodgings in Wine Office Court (1760-2): and it was here that he entertained at supper, as has already been mentioned, no less distinguished guests than Bishop, then Mr. Percy, and Dr., then Mr. Johnson. Every one has heard of the surprise of Percy, on calling for Johnson, to find the great Cham dressed with quite unusual smartness. On asking the cause of this "singular transformation," Johnson replied, "Why, sir, I hear that Goldsmith, who is a very great sloven, justifies his disregard of cleanliness and decency by quoting my practice; and I am desirous this night to show him a better example." That Goldsmith profited by this example—though the tailors did not—is clear enough. At times, indeed, he blossomed out into the splendours of a dandy; and laughed at himself for doing so. But whether he was in gorgeous or in mean attire, he remained the same sort of happy-go-lucky creature; working hard by fits and starts; continually getting money in advance from the booksellers; enjoying the present hour; and apparently happy enough when not pressed by debt. That he should have been thus pressed was no necessity of the case; at all events we need not on this score begin now to abuse the booksellers or the public of that day. We may dismiss once for all the oft repeated charges of ingratitude and neglect.

When Goldsmith was writing those letters in the *Public Ledger*—with "pleasure and instruction for others," Mr. Forster says, "though at the cost of suffering to himself"—he was receiving for them alone what would be equivalent in our day to £200 a year. No man can affirm that £200 a year is not amply sufficient for all the material wants of life. Of course there are fine things in the world that that amount of annual wage cannot purchase. It is a fine thing to sit on the deck of

a yacht on a summer's day, and watch the far islands shining over the blue; it is a fine thing to drive four-in-hand to Ascot—if you can do it; it is a fine thing to cower breathless behind a rock and find a splendid stag coming slowly within sure range. But these things are not necessary to human happiness: it is possible to do without them and yet not “suffer.” Even if Goldsmith had given half of his substance away to the poor, there was enough left to cover all the necessary wants of a human being; and if he chose so to order his affairs as to incur the suffering of debt, why, that was his own business, about which nothing further needs be said. It is to be suspected, indeed, that he did not care to practise those excellent maxims of prudence and frugality which he frequently preached; but the world is not much concerned about that now. If Goldsmith had received ten times as much money as the booksellers gave him, he would still have died in debt. And it is just possible that we may exaggerate Goldsmith's sensitiveness on this score. He had had a life-long familiarity with duns and borrowing; and seemed very contented when the exigency of the hour was tided over. An angry landlady is unpleasant, and an arrest is awkward; but in comes an opportune guinea, and the bottle of Madeira is opened forthwith.

In these rooms in Wine Office Court, and at the suggestion or entreaty of Newbery, Goldsmith produced a good deal of miscellaneous writing—pamphlets, tracts, compilations, and what not—of a more or less marketable kind. It can only be surmised that by this time he may have formed some idea of producing a book not solely meant for the market, and that the characters in the *Vicar of Wakefield* were already engaging his attention; but the surmise becomes probable enough when we remember that his project of writing the *Traveller*, which was not published till 1764, had been formed as far back as 1755; while he was wandering aimlessly about Europe, and that a sketch of the poem was actually forwarded by him then to his

brother Henry in Ireland. But in the meantime this hack-work, and the habits of life connected with it, began to tell on Goldsmith's health ; and so, for a time, he left London (1762), and went to Tunbridge and then to Bath. It is scarcely possible that his modest fame had preceded him to the latter place of fashion ; but it may be that the distinguished folk of the town received this friend of the great Dr. Johnson with some small measure of distinction ; for we find that his next published work, *The Life of Richard Nash, Esq.*, is respectfully dedicated to the Right Worshipful the Mayor, Recorder, Aldermen, and Common Council of the City of Bath. The Life of the recently deceased Master of Ceremonies was published anonymously (1762) ; but it was generally understood to be Goldsmith's ; and indeed the secret of the authorship was revealed in every successive line. Among the minor writings of Goldsmith there is none more delightful than this : the mock-heroic gravity, the half familiar contemptuous good-nature with which he composes this Funeral March of a Marionette, are extremely whimsical and amusing. And then what an admirable picture we get of fashionable English society in the beginning of the eighteenth century, when Bath and Nash were alike in the heyday of their glory—the fine ladies with their snuff-boxes, and their passion for play, and their extremely effective language when they got angry ; young bucks come to flourish away their money, and gain by their losses the sympathy of the fair ; sharpers on the look-out for guineas, and adventurers on the look-out for weak-minded heiresses ; duchesses writing letters in the most doubtful English, and chairmen swearing at any one who dared to walk home on foot at night.

No doubt the Life of Beau Nash was a bookseller's book ; and it was made as attractive as possible by the recapitulation of all sorts of romantic stories about Miss S——n, and Mr. C——e, and Captain K——g ; but throughout we find the historian very much inclined to laugh at his hero, and only refraining now and again in order to record in serious language



traits indicative of the real goodness of disposition of that fop and gambler. And the fine ladies and gentlemen, who lived in that atmosphere of scandal, and intrigue, and gambling, are also from time to time treated to a little decorous and respectful raillery. Who does not remember the famous laws of polite breeding written out by Mr. Nash—Goldsmith hints that neither Mr. Nash nor his fair correspondent at Blenheim, the Duchess of Marlborough, excelled in English composition—for the guidance of the ladies and gentlemen who were under the sway of the King of Bath? “But were we to give laws to a nursery, we should make them childish laws,” Goldsmith writes gravely. “His statutes, though stupid, were addressed to fine gentlemen and ladies, and were probably received with sympathetic approbation. It is certain they were in general religiously observed by his subjects, and executed by him with impartiality; neither rank nor fortune shielded the refractory from his resentment.” Nash, however, was not content with prose in enforcing good manners. Having waged deadly war against the custom of wearing boots, and having found his ordinary armory of no avail against the obduracy of the country squires, he assailed them in the impassioned language of poetry, and produced the following “Invitation to the Assembly,” which, as Goldsmith remarks, was highly relished by the nobility at Bath on account of its keenness, severity, and particularly its good rhymes.

“Come, one and all, to Hoyden Hall  
For there’s the assembly this night;  
None but rude fools  
Mind manners and rules;  
We Hoydens do decency slight.  
Come, trollops and slatterns,  
Cocked hats and white aprons,  
The best our modesty suits;  
For why should not we  
In dress be as free  
As Hogs-Norton squires in boots?”

The sarcasm was too much for the squires, who yielded in a body ; and when any stranger through inadvertence presented himself in the assembly-rooms in boots, Nash was so completely master of the situation that he would politely step up to the intruder and suggest that he had forgotten his horse.

Goldsmith does not magnify the intellectual capacity of his hero ; but he gives him credit for a sort of rude wit that was sometimes effective enough. His physician, for example, having called on him to see whether he had followed a prescription that had been sent him the previous day, was greeted in this fashion : “ Followed your prescription ? No. Egad, if I had, I should have broken my neck, for I flung it out of the two pair of stairs window.” For the rest, this diverting biography contains some excellent warnings against the vice of gambling ; with a particular account of the manner in which the Government of the day tried by statute after statute to suppress the tables at Tunbridge and Bath, thereby only driving the sharpers to new subterfuges. That the Beau was in alliance with sharpers, or at least, that he was a sleeping partner in the firm, his biographer admits ; but it is urged on his behalf that he was the most generous of winners, and again and again interfered to prevent the ruin of some gambler by whose folly he would himself have profited. His constant charity was well known ; the money so lightly come by was at the disposal of any one who could prefer a piteous tale. Moreover he made no scruple about exacting from others that charity which they could well afford. One may easily guess who was the duchess mentioned in the following story of Goldsmith’s narration :—

“ The sums he gave and collected for the Hospital were great, and his manner of doing it was no less admirable. I am told that he was once collecting money in Wiltshire’s rooms for that purpose, when a lady entered, who is more remarkable for her wit than her charity, and not being able to pass by him unobserved, she gave him a pat with her fan, and said, ‘ You must

put down a trifle for me, Nash, for I have no money in my pocket.' 'Yes, madam,' says he, 'that I will with pleasure, if your grace will tell me when to stop;' then taking a handful of guineas out of his pocket, he began to tell them into his white hat—'One, two, three, four, five——' 'Hold, hold! says the duchess, 'consider what you are about.' 'Consider your rank and fortune, madam,' says Nash, and continues telling—'six, seven, eight, nine, ten.' Here the duchess called again, and seemed angry. 'Pray compose yourself, madam,' cried Nash, 'and don't interrupt the work of charity,—eleven, twelve, thirteen, fourteen, fifteen.' Here the duchess stormed, and caught hold of his hand. 'Peace, madam,' says Nash, 'you shall have your name written in letters of gold, madam, and upon the front of the building, madam,—sixteen, seventeen, eighteen, nineteen, twenty.' 'I won't pay a farthing more, says the duchess. 'Charity hides a multitude of sins,' replies Nash, —'twenty-one, twenty-two, twenty-three, twenty-four, twenty-five.' 'Nash,' says she, 'I protest you frighten me out of my wits, L—d, I shall die!' 'Madam, you will never die with doing good; and if you do, it will be the better for you, answered Nash, and was about to proceed; but perceiving her grace had lost all patience, a parley ensued, when he, after much altercation, agreed to stop his hand and compound with her grace for thirty guineas. The duchess, however, seemed displeased the whole evening, and when he came to the table where she was playing, bid him, 'Stand farther, an ugly devil, for she hated the sight of him.' But her grace afterwards having a run of good luck, called Nash to her. 'Come,' says she, 'I will be friends with you, though you are a fool; and to let you see I am not angry, there is ten guineas more for your charity. But this I insist on, that neither my name nor the sum shall be mentioned.'"

At the ripe age of eighty-seven the "beau of three generations" breathed his last (1761); and, though he had fallen into

poor ways, there were those alive who remembered his former greatness, and who chronicled it in a series of epitaphs and lamentations. "One thing is common almost with all of them," says Goldsmith, "and that is that Venus, Cupid, and the Graces are commanded to weep, and that Bath shall never find such another." These effusions are forgotten now; and so would Beau Nash be also, but for this biography, which, no doubt meant merely for the book-market of the day, lives and is of permanent value by reason of the charm of its style, its pervading humour, and the vivacity of its descriptions of the fashionable follies of the eighteenth century. *Nullum fere genus scribendi non tetigit. Nullum quod tetigit non ornavit.* Who but Goldsmith could have written so delightful a book about such a poor creature as Beau Nash?

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## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE ARREST.

It was no doubt owing to Newbery that Goldsmith, after his return to London, was induced to abandon, temporarily or altogether, his apartments in Wine Office Court, and take lodgings in the house of a Mrs. Fleming, who lived somewhere or other in Islington. Newbery had rooms in Canonbury House, a curious old building that still exists; and it may have occurred to the publisher that Goldsmith, in this suburban district, would not only be nearer him for consultation and so forth, but also might pay more attention to his duties than when he was among the temptations of Fleet Street. Goldsmith was working industriously in the service of Newbery at

this time (1763-4); in fact, so completely was the bookseller in possession of the hack, that Goldsmith's board and lodging in Mrs. Fleming's house, arranged for at £50 a year, was paid by Newbery himself. Writing prefaces, revising new editions, contributing reviews—this was the sort of work he undertook, with more or less content, as the equivalent of the modest sums Mr. Newbery disbursed for him or handed over as pocket-money. In the midst of all this drudgery he was now secretly engaged on work that aimed at something higher than mere payment of bed and board. The smooth lines of the *Traveller* were receiving further polish; the gentle-natured *Vicar* was writing his simple, quaint, tender story. And no doubt Goldsmith was spurred to try something better than hack-work by the associations that he was forming, chiefly under the wise and benevolent friendship of Johnson.

Anxious always to be thought well of, he was now beginning to meet people whose approval was worthy of being sought. He had been introduced to Reynolds. He had become the friend of Hogarth. He had even made the acquaintance of Mr. Boswell, from Scotland. Moreover, he had been invited to become one of the original members of the famous Club of which so much has been written; his fellow-members being Reynolds, Johnson, Burke, Hawkins, Beauclerk, Bennet Langton, and Dr. Nugent. It is almost certain that it was at Johnson's instigation that he had been admitted into this choice fellowship. Long before either the *Traveller* or the *Vicar* had been heard of, Johnson had perceived the literary genius that obscurely burned in the uncouth figure of this Irishman; and was anxious to impress on others Goldsmith's claims to respect and consideration. In the minute record kept by Boswell of his first evening with Johnson at the Mitre Tavern, we find Johnson saying, "Dr. Goldsmith is one of the first men we now have as an author, and he is a very worthy man too. He has been loose in his principles, but he is coming right."

Johnson took walks with Goldsmith; did him the honour of disputing with him on all occasions; bought a copy of the *Life of Nash* when it appeared—an unusual compliment for one author to pay another, in their day or in ours; allowed him to call on Miss Williams, the blind old lady in Bolt Court; and generally was his friend, counsellor, and champion. Accordingly, when Mr. Boswell entertained the great Cham to supper at the Mitre—a sudden quarrel with his landlord having made it impossible for him to order the banquet at his own house—he was careful to have Dr. Goldsmith of the company. His guests that evening were Johnson, Goldsmith, Davies, (the actor and bookseller who had conferred on Boswell the invaluable favour of an introduction to Johnson), Mr. Eccles, and the Rev. Mr. Ogilvie, a Scotch poet who deserves our gratitude because it was his inopportune patriotism that provoked, on this very evening, the memorable epigram about the high-road leading to England. “Goldsmith,” says Boswell, who had not got over his envy at Goldsmith’s being allowed to visit the blind old pensioner in Bolt-court, “as usual, endeavoured with too much eagerness to *shine*, and disputed very warmly with Johnson against the well-known maxim of the British constitution, ‘The king can do no wrong.’” It was a dispute not so much about facts as about phraseology; and, indeed, there seems to be no great warmth in the expressions used on either side. Goldsmith affirmed that “what was morally false could not be politically true;” and that, in short, the king could by the misuse of his regal power do wrong. Johnson replied, that, in such a case, the immediate agents of the king were the persons to be tried and punished for the offence. “The king, though he should command, cannot force a judge to condemn a man unjustly; therefore it is the judge whom we prosecute and punish.” But when he stated that the king “is above everything, and there is no power by which he can be tried,” he was surely forgetting an important chapter in

English history. "What did Cromwell do for his country?" he himself asked, during his subsequent visit to Scotland, of old Auchinleck, Boswell's father. "God, Doctor," replied the vile Whig, "*he garred kings ken they had a lith in their necks.*"

For some time after this evening Goldsmith drops out of Boswell's famous memoir; perhaps the compiler was not anxious to give him too much prominence. They had not liked each other from the outset. Boswell, vexed by the greater intimacy of Goldsmith with Johnson, called him a blunderer, a feather-brained person; and described his appearance in no flattering terms. Goldsmith, on the other hand, on being asked who was this Scotch cur that followed Johnson's heels, answered, "He is not a cur: you are too severe—he is only a bur. Tom Davis flung him at Johnson in sport, and he has the faculty of sticking." Boswell would probably have been more tolerant of Goldsmith as a rival, if he could have known that on a future day he was to have Johnson all to himself—to carry him to remote wilds and exhibit him as a portentous literary phenomenon to Highland lairds. It is true that Johnson, at an early period of his acquaintance with Boswell, did talk vaguely about a trip to the Hebrides; but the young Scotch idolater thought it all too good to be true. The mention of Sir James Macdonald, says Boswell, "led us to talk of the Western islands of Scotland, to visit which he expressed a wish that then appeared to me a very romantic fancy, which I little thought would be afterwards realized. He told me that his father had put Martin's account of those islands into his hands when he was very young, and that he was highly pleased with it, that he was particularly struck with the St. Kilda man's notion that the high church of Glasgow had been hollowed out of a rock; a circumstance to which old Mr. Johnson had directed his attention." Unfortunately Goldsmith not only disappears from the pages of Boswell's biography at this time, but also in a great measure from the ken of his companions. He was

deeply in debt; no doubt the fine clothes he had been ordering from Mr. Filby in order that he might "shine" among those notable persons, had something to do with it; he had tried the patience of the booksellers; and he had been devoting a good deal of his time to work not intended to elicit immediate payment. The most patient endeavours to trace out his changes of lodgings, and the fugitive writings that kept him in daily bread, have not been very successful. It is to be presumed that Goldsmith had occasionally to go into hiding to escape from his creditors; and so was missed from his familiar haunts. We only reach daylight again, to find Goldsmith being under threat of arrest from his landlady; and for the particulars of this famous affair it is necessary to return to Boswell.

Boswell was not in London at that time; but his account was taken down subsequently from Johnson's narration; and his accuracy in other matters, his extraordinary memory, and scrupulous care, leave no doubt in the mind that his version of the story is to be preferred to those of Mrs. Piozzi and Sir John Hawkins. We may take it that these are Johnson's own words:—"I received one morning a message from poor Goldsmith that he was in great distress, and, as it was not in his power to come to me, begging that I would come to him as soon as possible. I sent him a guinea, and promised to come to him directly. I accordingly went as soon as I was dressed, and found that his landlady had arrested him for his rent, at which he was in a violent passion. I perceived that he had already changed my guinea, and had got a bottle of Madeira and a glass before him. I put the cork into the bottle, desired he would be calm, and began to talk to him of the means by which he might be extricated. He then told me that he had a novel ready for the press, which he produced to me. I looked into it, and saw its merit; told the landlady I should soon return; and, having gone to a bookseller, sold it for £60. I brought Goldsmith the money, and he discharged his rent, not



without rating his landlady in a high tone for having used him so ill."

We do not know who this landlady was—it cannot now be made out whether the incident occurred at Islington, or in the rooms that Goldsmith partially occupied in the Temple; but even if Mrs. Fleming be the landlady in question, she was deserving neither of Goldsmith's rating nor of the reprimands that have been bestowed upon her by later writers. Mrs. Fleming had been exceedingly kind to Goldsmith. Again and again in her bills we find items significantly marked £0 0s. 0d. And if her accounts with her lodger did get hopelessly into arrear; and if she was annoyed by seeing him go out in fine clothes to sup at the Mitre; and if, at length, her patience gave way, and she determined to have her rights in one way or another, she was no worse than landladies—who are only human beings, and not divinely appointed protectresses of genius—ordinarily are. Mrs. Piozzi says that when Johnson came back with the money, Goldsmith "called the woman of the house directly to partake of punch, and pass their time in merriment." This would be a dramatic touch; but, after Johnson's quietly corking the bottle of Madeira, it is more likely that no such thing occurred; especially as Boswell quotes the statement as an "extreme inaccuracy."

The novel which Johnson had taken away and sold to Francis Newbery, a nephew of the elder bookseller, was, as every one knows, the *Vicar of Wakefield*. That Goldsmith, amidst all his pecuniary distresses, should have retained this piece in his desk, instead of pawning or promising it to one of his bookselling patrons, points to but one conclusion—that he was building high hopes on it, and was determined to make it as good as lay within his power. Goldsmith put an anxious finish into all his better work; perhaps that is the secret of the graceful ease that is now apparent in every line. Any young writer who may imagine that the power of clear and

concise literary expression comes by nature, cannot do better than study, in Mr. Cunningham's big collection of Goldsmith's writings, the continual and minute alterations which the author considered necessary even after the first edition—sometimes when the second and third editions—had been published. Many of these, especially in the poetical works, were merely improvements in sound as suggested by a singularly sensitive ear, as when he altered the line

“Amidst the ruin, heedless of the dead.”

which had appeared in the first three editions of the *Traveller*, into

“There in the ruin, heedless of the dead.”

which appeared in the fourth. But the majority of the omissions and corrections were prompted by a careful taste, that abhorred everything redundant and slovenly. It has been suggested that when Johnson carried off the *Vicar of Wakefield* to Francis Newbery, the manuscript was not quite finished, but had to be completed afterwards. There was at least plenty of time for that. Newbery does not appear to have imagined that he had obtained a prize in the lottery of literature. He paid the £60 for it—clearly on the assurance of the great father of learning of the day, that there was merit in the little story—somewhere about the end of 1764; but the tale was not issued to the public until March, 1766. “And, sir,” remarked Johnson to Boswell, with regard to the sixty pounds, “a sufficient price too, when it was sold; for then the fame of Goldsmith had not been elevated, as it afterwards was, by his *Traveller*; and the bookseller had such faint hopes of profit by his bargain, that he kept the manuscript by him a long time, and did not publish it till after the *Traveller* had appeared. Then, to be sure, it was accidentally worth more money.”

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## CHAPTER IX.

## THE TRAVELLER.

THIS poem of the *Traveller*, the fruit of much secret labour and the consummation of the hopes of many years, was lying completed in Goldsmith's desk when the incident of the arrest occurred ; and the elder Newbery had undertaken to publish it. Then, as at other times, Johnson lent this wayward child of genius a friendly hand. He read over the proof-sheets for Goldsmith ; was so kind as to put in a line here or there where he thought fit ; and prepared a notice of the poem for the *Critical Review*. The time for the appearance of this new claimant for poetical honors was propitious. "There was perhaps no point in the century," says Professor Masson, "when the British Muse, such as she had come to be, was doing less, or had so nearly ceased to do anything, or to have any good opinion of herself, as precisely about the year 1764. Young was dying ; Gray was recluse and indolent ; Johnson had long given over his metrical experimentations on any except the most inconsiderable scale ; Akenside, Armstrong, Smollett, and others less known, had pretty well revealed the amount of their worth in poetry ; and Churchill, after his ferocious blaze of what was really rage and declamation in metre, though conventionally it was called poetry, was prematurely defunct. Into this lull came Goldsmith's short but carefully finished poem." "There has not been so fine a poem since Pope's time," remarked Johnson to Boswell, on the very first evening after the return of young Auchinleck to London. It would have been no matter for surprise had Goldsmith dedicated this first work that he published under his own name to Johnson, who had for so long been his constant friend and adviser ; and such

a dedication would have carried weight in certain quarters. But there was a finer touch in Goldsmith's thought of inscribing the book to his brother Henry ; and no doubt the public were surprised and pleased to find a poor devil of an author dedicating a work to an Irish parson with £40 a year, from whom he could not well expect any return. It will be remembered that it was to his brother Henry that Goldsmith, ten years before, had sent the first sketch of the poem ; and now the wanderer,

“ Remote, unfriended, melancholy, slow.”

declares how his heart untravelled

“ Still to my brother turns, with ceaseless pain,  
And drags at each remove a lengthening chain.”

The very first line of the poem strikes a key-note—there is in it a pathetic thrill of distance, and regret, and longing ; and it has the soft musical sound that pervades the whole composition. It is exceedingly interesting to note, as has already been mentioned, how Goldsmith altered and altered these lines until he had got them full of gentle vowel sounds. Where, indeed, in the English language could one find more graceful melody than this ?—

“ The naked negro, panting at the line,  
Boasts of his golden sands and palmy wine,  
Basks in the glare, or stems the tepid wave,  
And thanks his gods for all the good they gave.”

It has been observed also that Goldsmith was the first to introduce into English poetry sonorous American—or rather Indian—names, as when he writes in this poem,

“ Where wild Oswego spreads her swamps around  
And Niagara stuns with thundering sound,”

—and if it be charged against him that he ought to have known the proper accentuation of Niagara, it may be mentioned

as a set-off that Sir Walter Scott, in dealing with his own country, mis-accentuated "Glenaládale," to say nothing of his having made of Roseneath an island. Another characteristic of the *Traveller* is the extraordinary choiceness and conciseness of the diction, which, instead of suggesting pedantry or affectation, betrays on the contrary nothing but a delightful ease and grace.

The English people are very fond of good English; and thus it is that couplets from the *Traveller* and the *Deserted Village* have come into the common stock of our language, and that sometimes not so much on account of the ideas they convey, as through their singular precision of epithet and musical sound. It is enough to make the angels weep, to find such a couplet as this—

"Cheerful at morn, he wakes from short repose,  
Breasts the keen air, and carols as he goes,"

murdered in several editions of Goldsmith's works by the substitution of the commonplace "breathes" for "breasts"—and that, after Johnson had drawn particular attention to the line by quoting it in his Dictionary. Perhaps, indeed, it may be admitted that the literary charm of the *Traveller* is more apparent than the value of any doctrine, however profound or ingenious, which the poem was supposed to inculcate. We forget all about the "particular principle of happiness" possessed by each European state, in listening to the melody of the singer, and in watching the successive and delightful pictures that he calls up before the imagination.

"As in those domes where Cæsars once bore sway,  
Defaced by time, and tottering in decay,  
There in the ruin, heedless of the dead,  
The shelter-seeking peasant builds his shed;  
And, wondering man could want the larger pile,  
Exults, and owns his cottage with a smile."

Then notice the blaze of patriotic idealism that bursts forth

when he comes to talk of England. What sort of England had he been familiar with when he was consorting with the meanest wretches—the poverty stricken, the sick, and squalid—in those Fleet Street dens? But it is an England of bright streams and spacious lawns of which he writes; and as for the people who inhabit the favoured land—

“Stern o’er each bosom reason holds her state,  
With daring aims irregularly great;  
Pride in their port, defiance in their eye,  
I see the lords of human kind pass by.”

“Whenever I write anything,” Goldsmith had said, with a humorous exaggeration which Boswell, as usual, takes *au sérieux*, “the public *make a point* to know nothing about it.” But we have Johnson’s testimony to the fact that the *Traveller* “brought him into high reputation.” No wonder. When the great Cham declares it to be the finest poem published since the time of Pope, we are irresistibly forced to think of the *Essay on Man*. What a contrast there is between that tedious and stilted effort, and this clear burst of bird-song! The *Traveller*, however, did not immediately become popular. It was largely talked about, naturally, among Goldsmith’s friends; and Johnson would scarcely suffer any criticism of it. At a dinner given long afterwards at Sir Joshua Reynold’s, and fully reported by the invaluable Boswell, Reynolds remarked, “I was glad to hear Charles Fox say it was one of the finest poems in the English language.” “Why were you glad?” said Langton. “You surely had no doubt of this before!” Hereupon Johnson struck in: “No; the merit of the *Traveller* is so well established, that Mr. Fox’s praise cannot augment it, nor his censure diminish it.” And he went on to say—Goldsmith having died and got beyond the reach of all critics and creditors some three or four years before this time—“Goldsmith was a man who, whatever he wrote, did it better than any

other man could do. He deserved a place in Westminster Abbey; and every year he lived would have deserved it better."

Presently people began to talk about the new poem. A second edition was issued; a third: a fourth. It is not probable that Goldsmith gained any pecuniary benefit from the growing popularity of the little book; but he had "struck for honest fame," and that was now coming to him. He even made some slight acquaintance with "the great;" and here occurs an incident which is one of many that account for the love which the English people have for Goldsmith. It appears that Hawkins, calling one day on the Earl of Northumberland, found the author of the *Traveller* waiting in the outer room, in response to an invitation. Hawkins, having finished his own business, retired, but lingered about until the interview between Goldsmith and his lordship was over, having some curiosity about the result. Here follows Goldsmith's report to Hawkins. "His lordship told me he had read my poem, and was much delighted with it; that he was going to be Lord-lieutenant of Ireland; and that, hearing that I was a native of that country, he should be glad to do me any kindness." "What did you answer?" says Hawkins, no doubt expecting to hear of some application for pension or post. "Why," said Goldsmith, "I could say nothing but that I had a brother there, a clergyman, that stood in need of help,"—and then he explained to Hawkins that he looked to the booksellers for support, and was not inclined to place dependence on the promises of great men. "Thus did this idiot in the affairs of the world," adds Hawkins, with a fatuity that is quite remarkable in its way, "trifle with his fortunes, and put back the hand that was held out to assist him! Other offers of a like kind he either rejected or failed to improve, contenting himself with the patronage of one nobleman, whose mansion afforded him the delights of a splendid table and a retreat for a few days from the metropolis." It is a great pity we have not a description from the same pen of Johnson's insolent ingratitude in flinging the pair of boots down stairs

## CHAPTER X.

## MISCELLANEOUS WRITING.

BUT one pecuniary result of this growing fame was a joint offer on the part of Griffin and Newbery of £20 for a selection from his printed essays; and this selection was forthwith made and published, with a preface written for the occasion. Here at once we can see that Goldsmith takes firmer ground. There is an air of confidence—of gait, even—in his address to the public; although, as usual, accompanied by a whimsical mock-modesty that is extremely odd and effective. “Whatever right I have to complain of the public,” he says, “they can, as yet, have no just reason to complain of me. If I have written dull Essays, they have hitherto treated them as dull Essays. Thus far we are at least upon par, and until they think fit to make me their humble debtor by praise, I am resolved not to lose a single inch of my self-importance. Instead, therefore, of attempting to establish a credit amongst them, it will perhaps be wiser to apply to some more distant correspondent; and as my drafts are in some danger of being protested at home, it may not be imprudent, upon this occasion, to draw my bills upon Posterity.

“MR. POSTERITY,

“SIR,—Nine hundred and ninety-nine years after sight hereof pay the bearer, or order, a thousand pounds worth of praise, free from all deductions whatsoever, it being a commodity that will then be very serviceable to him, and place it to the account of, &c.”

The bill is not yet due; but there can in the meantime be no harm in discounting it so far as to say that these Essays deserve



very decided praise. They deal with all manner of topics, matters of fact, matters of imagination, humorous descriptions, learned criticisms; and then, whenever the entertainer thinks he is becoming dull, he suddenly tells a quaint little story and walks off amidst the laughter he knows he has produced. It is not a very ambitious or sonorous sort of literature; but it was admirably fitted for its aim—the passing of the immediate hour in an agreeable and fairly intellectual way. One can often see, no doubt, that these essays are occasionally written in a more or less perfunctory fashion, the writer not being moved by much enthusiasm in his subject; but even then a quaint literary grace seldom fails to atone, as when, writing about the English clergy, and complaining that they do not sufficiently in their addresses stoop to mean capacities, he says—“Whatever may become of the higher orders of mankind, who are generally possessed of collateral motives to virtue, the vulgar should be particularly regarded, whose behaviour in civil life is totally hinged upon their hopes and fears. Those who constitute the basis of the great fabric of society should be particularly regarded; for in policy, as in architecture, ruin is most fatal when it begins from the bottom.” There was, indeed, throughout Goldsmith’s miscellaneous writing much more common sense than might have been expected from a writer who was supposed to have none.

As regards his chance criticisms on dramatic and poetical literature, these are generally found to be incisive and just; while sometimes they exhibit a wholesome disregard of mere tradition and authority. “Milton’s translation of Horace’s Ode to Pyrrha,” he says, for example, “is universally known and generally admired, in our opinion much above its merit.” If the present writer might for a moment venture into such an arena, he would express the honest belief that that translation is the very worst translation that was ever made of anything. But there is the happy rendering of *simplex munditiis*, which counts for much.

By this time Goldsmith had also written his charming ballad of *Edwin and Angelina*, which was privately "printed for the amusement of the Countess of Northumberland," and which afterwards appeared in the *Vicar of Wakefield*. It seems clear enough that this quaint and pathetic piece was suggested by an old ballad beginning,

"Gentle herdsman, tell to me,  
Of curtesy I thee pray,  
Unto the towne of Walsingham  
Which is the right and ready way,"

which Percy had shown to Goldsmith, and which, patched up, subsequently appeared in the *Reliques*. But Goldsmith's ballad is original enough to put aside all the discussion about plagiarism which was afterwards started. In the old fragment the weeping pilgrim receives directions from the herdsman, and goes on her way, and we hear of her no more; in *Edwin and Angelina* the forlorn and despairing maiden suddenly finds herself confronted by the long-lost lover whom she had so cruelly used. This is the dramatic touch that reveals the hand of the artist. And here again it is curious to note the care with which Goldsmith repeatedly revised his writings. The ballad originally ended with these two stanzas :—

"Here amidst sylvan bowers we'll rove,  
From lawn to woodland stray;  
Blest as the songsters of the grove,  
And innocent as they.

"To all that want, and all that wail,  
Our pity shall be given,  
And when this life of love shall fail,  
We'll love again in heaven."

But subsequently it must have occurred to the author, that the dramatic disclosures once made, and the lovers restored to each other, any lingering over the scene only weakened the force of

the climax ; hence these stanzas were judiciously excised. It may be doubted, however, whether the original version of the last couplet :—

“ And the last sigh that rends the heart  
Shall break thy Edwin's too,”

was improved by being altered to

“ The sigh that rends thy constant heart  
Shall break thy Edwin's too.”

Meanwhile Goldsmith had resorted to hack-work again ; nothing being expected from the *Vicar of Wakefield*, now lying in Newbery's shop, for that had been paid for, and his expenses were increasing, as became his greater station. In the interval between the publication of the *Traveller* and of the *Vicar*, he moved into better chambers in Garden Court ; he hired a manservant, he blossomed out into very fine clothes. Indeed, so effective did his first suit seem to be—the purple silk small-clothes, the scarlet roquelaure, the wig, sword, and gold-headed cane—that, as Mr. Foster said, he “ amazed his friends with no less than three similar suits, not less expensive, in the next six months.” Part of this display was no doubt owing to a suggestion from Reynolds that Goldsmith, having a medical degree, might just as well add the practice of a physician to his literary work, to magnify his social position. Goldsmith, always willing to please his friends, acceded ; but his practice does not appear to have been either extensive or long-continued. It is said that he drew out a prescription for a certain Mrs Sidebotham which so appalled the apothecary that he refused to make it up ; and that, as the lady sided with the apothecary, he threw up the case and his profession at the same time. If it was money Goldsmith wanted, he was not likely to get it in that way ; he had neither the appearance nor the manner fitted to humour the sick and transform healthy people into valetudinarians. If it was the esteem of his friends and popu-

larity outside that circle, he was soon to acquire enough of both. On the 27th March, 1766, fifteen months after the appearance of the *Traveller*, the *The Vicar of Wakefield* was published.

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## CHAPTER XI.

### THE VICAR OF WAKEFIELD.

THE *Vicar of Wakefield*, considered structurally, follows the lines of the Book of Job. You take a good man, overwhelm him with successive misfortunes, show the pure flame of his soul burning in the midst of the darkness, and then, as the reward of his patience and fortitude and submission, restore him gradually to happiness, with even larger flocks and herds than before. The machinery by which all this is brought about is, in the *Vicar of Wakefield*, the weak part of the story. The plot is full of wild improbabilities; in fact, the expedients by which all the members of the family are brought together and made happy at the same time, are nothing short of desperate. It is quite clear, too, that the author does not know what to make of the episode of Olivia and her husband; they are allowed to drop through; we leave him playing the French horn at a relation's house; while she, in her father's home, is supposed to be unnoticed, so much are they all taken up with the rejoicings over the double wedding. It is very probable that when Goldsmith began the story he had no very definite plot concocted; and that it was only when the much persecuted Vicar had to be restored to happiness, that he found the entanglements surrounding him, and had to make frantic efforts to break through them. But, be that as it may, it is not for

the plot that people now read the *Vicar of Wakefield*; it is not the intricacies of the story that have made it the delight of the world. Surely human nature must be very much the same when this simple description of a quiet English home went straight to the heart of nations in both hemispheres.

And the wonder is that Goldsmith of all men should have produced such a perfect picture of domestic life. What had his own life been but a moving about between garret and tavern, between bachelor's lodgings and clubs? Where had he seen—unless, indeed, he looked back through the mist of years to the scenes of his childhood—all this gentle government, and wise blindness; all this affection, and consideration, and respect? There is as much human nature in the character of the Vicar alone as would have furnished any fifty of the novels of that day, or of this. Who has not been charmed by his sly and quaint humour, by his moral dignity and simple vanities, even by the little secrets he reveals to us of his paternal rule. “‘Ay,’ returned I, not knowing well what to think of the matter, ‘heaven grant they may be both the better for it this day three months!’ This was one of those observations I usually made to impress my wife with an opinion of my sagacity; for if the girls succeeded, then it was a pious wish fulfilled; but if anything unfortunate ensued, then it might be looked on as a prophecy.” We know how Miss Olivia was answered, when, at her mother’s prompting, she set up for being well skilled in controversy:—

“‘Why, my dear, what controversy can she have read?’ cried I. ‘It does not occur to me that I ever put such books into her hands: you certainly overrate her merit.’—‘Indeed, papa,’ replied Olivia, ‘she does not; I have read a great deal of controversy. I have read the disputes between Thwackum and Square; the controversy between Robinson Crusoe and Friday, the savage; and I am now employed in reading the controversy in Religious Courtship.’—‘Very well,’ cried I, ‘that’s a good girl; I find you are perfectly qualified for

making converts, and so go help your mother to make the gooseberry pie.' ”

It is with a great gentleness that the good man reminds his wife and daughters that, after their sudden loss of fortune, it does not become them to wear much finery. “The first Sunday, in particular, their behaviour served to mortify me. I had desired my girls the preceding night to be dressed early the next day ; for I always loved to be at church a good while before the rest of the congregation. They punctually obeyed my directions ; but when we were to assemble in the morning at breakfast, down came my wife and daughters, dressed out in all their former splendour ; their hair plastered up with pomatum, their faces patched to taste, their trains bundled up in a heap behind, and rustling at every motion. I could not help smiling at their vanity, particularly that of my wife, from whom I expected more discretion. In this exigence, therefore, my only resource was to order my son, with an important air, to call our coach. The girls were amazed at the command ; but I repeated it with more solemnity than before. ‘Surely, my dear, you jest,’ cried my wife ; ‘we can walk it perfectly well ; we want no coach to carry us now.’—‘You mistake, child,’ returned I, ‘we do want a coach ; for if we walk to church in this trim, the very children in the parish will hoot after us.’—‘Indeed,’ replied my wife, ‘I always imagined that my Charles was fond of seeing his children neat and handsome about him.’—‘You may be as neat as you please,’ interrupted I, ‘and I shall love you the better for it ; but all this is not neatness, but frippery. These ruffings, and pinkings, and patchings will only make us hated by all the wives of our neighbours. No, my children,’ continued I, more gravely, ‘those gowns may be altered into something of a plainer cut ; for finery is very unbecoming in us, who want the means of decency. I do not know whether such flouncing and shredding is becoming even in the rich, if we consider, upon a moderate calculation, that the nakedness

of the indigent world might be clothed from the trimmings of the vain."

"This remonstrance had the proper effect: they went with great composure, that very instant, to change their dress; and the next day I had the satisfaction of finding my daughters, at their own request, employed in cutting up their trains into Sunday waistcoats for Dick and Bill, the two little ones; and, what was still more satisfactory, the gowns seemed improved by this curtailing." And again when he discovered the two girls making a wash for their faces:—"My daughters seemed equally busy with the rest; and I observed them for a good while cooking something over the fire. I at first supposed they were assisting their mother, but little Dick informed me, in a whisper, that they were making a wash for the face. Washes of all kinds I had a natural antipathy to; for I knew that, instead of mending the complexion, they spoil it. I therefore approached my chair by sly degrees to the fire, and grasping the poker, as if it wanted mending, seemingly by accident overturned the whole composition, and it was too late to begin another."

All this is done with such a light, homely touch, that one gets familiarly to know the people without being aware of it. There is no insistance. There is no dragging you along by the collar; confronting you with certain figures; and compelling you to look at this and study that. The artist stands by you, and laughs in his quiet way; and you are laughing too; when suddenly you find that human beings have silently come into the void before you; and you know them for friends; and even after the vision has faded away, and the beautiful light and colour and glory of romance-land have vanished, you cannot forget them. They have become part of your life; you will take them to the grave with you.

The story, as every one perceives, has its obvious blemishes. "There are an hundred faults in this thing," says Goldsmith

himself in the prefixed Advertisement. But more particularly, in the midst of all the impossibilities taking place in and around the jail, when that chameleon-like *deus ex machinâ*, Mr. Jenkinson, winds up the tale in hot haste, Goldsmith pauses to put in a sort of apology. "Nor can I go on without a reflection," he says gravely, "on those accidental meetings, which, though they happen every day, seldom excite our surprise but upon some extraordinary occasion. To what a fortuitous concurrence do we not owe every pleasure and convenience of our lives! How many seeming accidents must unite before we can be clothed or fed! The peasant must be disposed to labour, the shower must fall, the wind fill the merchant's sail, or numbers must want the usual supply." This is Mr. Thackeray's "simple rogue" appearing again in adult life. Certainly, if our supply of food and clothing depended on such accidents as happened to make the Vicar's family happy all at once, there would be a good deal of shivering and starvation in the world. Moreover it may be admitted than on occasion Goldsmith's fine instinct deserts him; and even in describing those domestic relations which are the charm of the novel, he blunders into the unnatural. When Mr. Burchell, for example, leaves the house in consequence of a quarrel with Mrs. Primrose, the Vicar questions his daughter as to whether she had received from that poor gentleman any testimony of his affection for her. She replies No; but remembers to have heard him remark that he never knew a woman who could find merit in a man that was poor. "Such, my dear," continued the Vicar, "is the common cant of all the unfortunate or idle. But I hope you have been taught to judge properly of such men, and that it would be even madness to expect happiness from one who has been so very bad an economist of his own. Your mother and I have now better prospects for you. The next winter, which you will probably spend in town, will give you opportunities of making a more prudent choice." Now it is not at all likely that a father,



however anxious to have his daughter well married and settled, would ask her so delicate a question in open domestic circle, and would then publicly inform her that she was expected to choose a husband on her forthcoming visit to town.

Whatever may be said about any particular incident like this, the atmosphere of the book is true. Goethe, to whom a German translation of the *Vicar* was read by Herder some four years after the publication in England, not only declared it at the time to be one of the best novels ever written, but again and again throughout his life reverted to the charm and delight with which he had made the acquaintance of the English "prose-idyll," and took it for granted that it was a real picture of English life. Despite all the machinery of Mr. Jenkinson's schemes, who could doubt it? Again and again there are recurrent strokes of such vividness and naturalness that we yield altogether to the necromancer. Look at this perfect picture—of human emotion and outside nature—put in a few sentences. The old clergyman, after being in search of his daughter, has found her, and is now—having left her in an inn—returning to his family and his home. "And now my heart caught new sensations of pleasure, the nearer I approach that peaceful mansion. As a bird that had been frightened from its nest, my affections outwent my haste, and hovered round my little fireside with all the rapture of expectation. I called up the many fond things I had to say, and anticipated the welcome I was to receive. I already felt my wife's tender embrace, and smiled at the joy of my little ones. As I walked but slowly, the night waned apace. The labourers of the day were all retired to rest; the lights were out in every cottage; no sounds were heard but of the shrilling cock, and the deep-mouthed watch-dog at hollow distance. I approached my little abode of pleasure, and, before I was within a furlong of the place, our honest mastiff came running to welcome me." "*The deep-mouthed watch-dog at hollow distance;*"—what more perfect description of the stillness of night was ever given?

And then there are other qualities in this delightful *Vicar of Wakefield* than merely idyllic tenderness, and pathos, and sly humour. There is a firm presentation of the crimes and brutalities of the world. The pure light that shines within that domestic circle is all the brighter because of the black outer ring that is here and there indicated rather than described. How could we appreciate all the simplicities of the good man's household, but for the rogueries with which they are brought in contact? And although we laugh at Moses and his gross of green spectacles, and the manner in which the Vicar's wife and daughter are imposed on by Miss Wilhelmina Skeggs and Lady Blarney, with their lords and ladies and their tributes to virtue, there is no laughter demanded of us when we find the simplicity and moral dignity of the Vicar meeting and beating the jeers and taunts of the abandoned wretches in the prison. This is really a remarkable episode. The author was under the obvious temptation to make much comic material out of the situation; while another temptation, towards the goody-goody side, was not far off. But the Vicar undertakes the duty of reclaiming these castaways with a modest patience and earnestness in every way in keeping with his character; while they, on the other hand, are not too easily moved to tears of repentance. His first efforts, it will be remembered, were not too successful. "Their insensibility excited my highest compassion, and blotted my own uneasiness from my mind. It even appeared a duty incumbent upon me to attempt to reclaim them. I resolved, therefore, once more to return, and, in spite of their contempt, to give them my advice, and conquer them by my perseverance. Going, therefore, among them again, I informed Mr. Jenkinson of my design, at which he laughed heartily, but communicated it to the rest. The proposal was received with the greatest good humour, as it promised to afford a new fund of entertainment to persons who had now no other resource for mirth but what could be derived from ridicule or debauchery.

"I therefore read them a portion of the service with a loud, unaffected voice, and found my audience perfectly merry upon the occasion. Lewd whispers, groans of contrition burlesqued, winking and coughing, alternately excited laughter. However, I continued with my natural solemnity to read on, sensible that what I did might mend some, but could itself receive no contamination from any.

"After reading, I entered upon my exhortation, which was rather calculated at first to amuse them than to reprove. I previously observed, that no other motive but their welfare could induce me to this; that I was their fellow-prisoner, and now got nothing by preaching. I was sorry, I said, to hear them so very profane; because they got nothing by it, but might lose a great deal: 'For be assured, my friends,' cried I, —'for you are my friends, however the world may disclaim your friendship,—though you swore twelve thousand oaths in a day, it would not put one penny in your purse. Then what signifies calling every moment upon the devil, and courting his friendship, since you find how scurvily he uses you? He has given you nothing here, you find, but a mouthful of oaths and an empty belly; and, by the best accounts I have of him, he will give you nothing that's good hereafter.

"'If used ill in our dealings with one man, we naturally go elsewhere. Were it not worth your while, then, just to try how you may like the usage of another master, who gives you fair promises at least to come to him? Surely, my friends, of all stupidity in the world, his must be the greatest, who, after robbing a house, runs to the thief-takers for protection. And yet, how are you more wise? You are all seeking comfort from one that has already betrayed you, applying to a more malicious being than any thief-taker of them all; for they only decoy and then hang you; but he decoys and harks, and, what is worst of all, will not let you loose after the hangman has done.'

“When I had concluded, I received the compliments of my audience, some of whom came and shook me by the hand, swearing that I was a very honest fellow, and that they desired my further acquaintance. I therefore promised to repeat my lecture next day, and actually conceived some hopes of making a reformation here ; for it had ever been my opinion, that no man was past the hour of amendment, every heart lying open to the shafts of reproof, if the archer could but take a proper aim.”

His wife and children, naturally dissuading him from an effort which seemed to them only to bring ridicule upon him, are met by a grave rebuke ; and on the next morning he descends to the common prison, where, he says, he found the prisoners very merry, expecting his arrival, and each prepared to play some gaol-trick on the Doctor.

“There was one whose trick gave more universal pleasure than all the rest ; for, observing the manner in which I had disposed my books on the table before me, he very dexterously displaced one of them, and put an obscene jest-book of his own in the place. However, I took no notice of all that this mischievous group of little beings could do, but went on, perfectly sensible that what was ridiculous in my attempt would excite mirth only the first or second time, while what was serious would be permanent. My design succeeded, and in less than six days some were penitent, and all attentive.”

“It was now that I applauded my perseverance and address, at thus giving sensibility to wretches divested of every moral feeling, and now began to think of doing them temporal services also, by rendering their situation somewhat more comfortable. Their time had hitherto been divided between famine and excess, tumultuous riot and bitter repining. Their only employment was quarrelling among each other, playing at cribbage, and cutting tobacco-stoppers. From this last mode

of idle industry I took the hint of setting such as choose to work at cutting pegs for tobacconists and shoemakers, the proper wood being bought by a general subscription, and, when manufactured, sold by my appointment; so that each earned something every day—a trifle indeed, but sufficient to maintain him.

“I did not stop here, but instituted fines for the punishment of immorality, and rewards for peculiar industry. Thus, in less than a fortnight I had formed them into something social and humane, and had the pleasure of regarding myself as a legislator who had brought men from their native ferocity into friendship and obedience.”

Of course, all this about gaols and thieves was calculated to shock the nerves of those who liked their literature perfumed with rose-water. Madame Riccoboni, to whom Burke had sent the book, wrote to Garrick, “*Le plaidoyer en faveur des voleurs, des petits larrons, des gens de mauvaises mœurs, est fort éloigné de me plair.*” Others, no doubt, considered the introduction of Miss Skeggs and Lady Blarney as “vastly low.” But the curious thing is that the literary critics of the day seem to have been altogether silent about the book—perhaps they were “puzzled” by it, as Southey has suggested. Mr. Forster, who took the trouble to search the periodical literature of the time, says that, “apart from bald recitals of the plot, not a word was said in the way of criticism about the book, either in praise or blame.” The *St. James's Chronicle* did not condescend to notice its appearance, and the *Monthly Review* confessed frankly that nothing was to be made of it. The better sort of newspapers, as well as the more dignified reviews, contemptuously left it to the patronage of *Lloyd's Evening Post*, the *London Chronicle*, and journals of that class; which simply informed their readers that a new novel, called the *Vicar of Wakefield*, had been published, that “the editor is Doctor Goldsmith, who has affixed his name to an introductory

Advertisement, and that such and such were the incidents of the story." Even his friends, with the exception of Burke, did not seem to consider that any remarkable new birth in literature had occurred; and it is probable that this was a still greater disappointment to Goldsmith, who was so anxious to be thought well of at the Club. However, the public took to the story. A second edition was published in May; a third in August. Goldsmith, it is true, received no pecuniary gain from this success, for, as we have seen, Johnson had sold the novel outright to Francis Newbery; but his name was growing in importance with the booksellers.

There was need that it should, for his increasing expenses—his fine clothes, his suppers, his whist at the Devil Tavern—were involving him in deeper and deeper difficulties. How was he to extricate himself?—or rather the question that would naturally occur to Goldsmith was how was he to continue that hand-to-mouth existence that had its compensations along with its troubles? Novels like the *Vicar of Wakefield* are not written at a moment's notice, even though any Newbery, judging by results, is willing to double that £60 which Johnson considered to be a fair price for the story at the time. There was the usual resource hack-writing; and, no doubt, Goldsmith was compelled to fall back on that, if only to keep the elder Newbery, in whose debt he was, in a good humour. But the author of the *Vicar of Wakefield* may be excused if he looked round to see if there was not some more profitable work for him to turn his hand to. It was at this time that he began to think of writing a comedy.

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## CHAPTER XII.

## THE GOOD-NATURED MAN.

AMID much miscellaneous work, mostly of the compilation order, the play of the *Good-Natured Man* began to assume concrete form; insomuch that Johnson, always the friend of this erratic Irishman, had promised to write a Prologue for it. It is with regard to this Prologue that Boswell tells a foolish and untrustworthy story about Goldsmith. Dr. Johnson had recently been honoured by an interview with his Sovereign; and the members of the Club were in the habit of flattering him by begging for a repetition of his account of that famous event. On one occasion, during this recital, Boswell relates, Goldsmith "remained unmoved upon a sofa at some distance, affecting not to join in the least in the eager curiosity of the company. He assigned as a reason for his gloom and seeming inattention that he apprehended Johnson had relinquished his purpose of furnishing him with a Prologue to his play, with the hopes of which he had been flattered; but it was strongly suspected that he was fretting with chagrin and envy at the singular honour Dr. Johnson had lately enjoyed. At length the frankness and simplicity of his natural character prevailed. He sprang from the sofa, advanced to Johnson, and, in a kind of flutter, from imagining himself in the situation which he had just been hearing described, exclaimed, 'Well, you acquitted yourself in this conversation better than I should have done; for I should have bowed and stammered through the whole of it.'" It is obvious enough that the only part of this anecdote which is quite worthy of credence is the actual phrase used by Goldsmith, which is full of his customary generosity and self-depreciation. All those "suspicions" of his envy of his friend may safely be

discarded, for they are mere guesswork ; even though it might have been natural enough for a man like Goldsmith, conscious of his singular and original genius, to measure himself against Johnson, who was merely a man of keen perception and shrewd reasoning, and to compare the deference paid to Johnson with the scant courtesy shown to himself.

As a matter of fact, the Prologue was written by Dr. Johnson ; and the now complete comedy was, after some little arrangement of personal differences between Goldsmith and Garrick, very kindly undertaken by Reynolds, submitted for Garrick's approval. But nothing came of Reynold's intervention. Perhaps Goldsmith resented Garrick's airs of patronage towards a poor devil of an author ; perhaps Garrick was surprised by the manner in which well-intentioned criticisms were taken ; at all events, after a good deal of shilly-shallying, the play was taken out of Garrick's hands. Fortunately, a project was just at this moment on foot for starting the rival theatre in Covent Garden, under the management of George Colman ; and to Colman Goldsmith's play was forthwith consigned. The play was accepted ; but it was a long time before it was produced ; and in that interval it may fairly be presumed the *res angusta domi* of Goldsmith did not become any more free and generous than before. It was in this interval that the elder Newbery died ; Goldsmith had one patron the less. Another patron who offered himself was civilly bowed to the door. This is an incident in Goldsmith's career which, like his interview with the Earl of Northumberland, should ever be remembered in his honour. The Government of the day were desirous of enlisting on their behalf the services of writers of somewhat better position than the mere libellers whose pens were the slaves of anybody's purse ; and a Mr. Scott, a chaplain of Lord Sandwich, appears to have imagined that it would be worth while to buy Goldsmith. He applied to Goldsmith in due course ; and this is an account of the interview. "I found him in a miserable



set of chambers in the Temple. I told him my authority : I told him I was empowered to pay most liberally for his exertions ; and, would you believe it ! he was so absurd as to say, ‘ I can earn as much as will supply my wants without writing for any party ; the assistance you offer is therefore unnecessary to me.’ And I left him in his garret.” Needy as he was, Goldsmith had too much self-respect to become a paid libeller and cutthroat of public reputations.

On the evening of Friday, the 29th of January, 1768, when Goldsmith had now reached the age of forty, the comedy of *The Good-natured Man* was produced at Covent Garden Theatre. The Prologue had, according to promise, been written by Johnson ; and a very singular prologue it was. Even Boswell was struck by the odd contrast between the sonorous piece of melancholy and the fun that was to follow. “ The first lines of this Prologue,” he conscientiously remarks, “ are strongly characteristic of the dismal gloom of his mind ; which, in his case, as in the case of all who are distressed with the same malady of imagination, transfers to others its own feelings. Who could suppose it was to introduce a comedy, when Mr. Bensley solemnly began—

“ ‘ Pressed with the load of life, the weary mind  
Surveys the general toil of humankind.’ ”

But this dark ground might make Goldsmith’s humour shine the more.” When we come to the comedy itself, we find but little bright humor in the opening passages. The author is obviously timid, anxious, and constrained. There is nothing of the brisk, confident vivacity with which *She Stoops to Conquer* opens. The novice does not yet understand the art of making his characters explain themselves ; and accordingly the benevolent uncle and honest Jarvis indulge in a conversation which, laboriously descriptive of the character of young Honeywood, is spoken “ at ” the audience. With the entrance of young

Honeywood himself, Goldsmith endeavours to become a little more sprightly ; but there is still anxiety hanging over him, and the epigrams are little more than merely formal antitheses. *contrast*

"*Jarvis*. This bill from your tailor ; this from your mercer ; and this from the little broker in Crooked Lane. He says he has been at a great deal of trouble to get back the money you borrowed.

*Hon*. That I don't know ; but I'm sure we were at a great deal of trouble in getting him to lend it.

*Jar*. He has lost all patience.

*Hon*. Then he has lost a very good thing.

*Jar*. There's that ten guineas you were sending to the poor gentleman and his children in the Fleet. I believe that would stop his mouth for a while at least.

*Hon*. Ay, *Jarvis*, but what will fill their mouths in the mean time ?"

This young Honeywood, the hero of the play, is, and remains throughout, a somewhat ghostly personage. He has attributes, but no flesh or blood. There is much more substance in the next character introduced—the inimitable Croaker, who revels in evil forebodings and drinks deep of the luxury of woe. These are the two chief characters ; but then a play must have a plot. And perhaps it would not be fair, so far as the plot is concerned, to judge *The Good-natured Man* merely as a literary production. Intricacies that seem tedious and puzzling on paper appear to be clear enough on the stage ; it is much more easy to remember the history and circumstances of a person whom we see before us, than to attach these to a mere name—especially as the name is sure to be clipped down from *Honeywood* to *Hon*. and from *Leontine* to *Leon*. However it is in the midst of all the cross-purposes of the lovers that we once more come upon our old friend Beau Tibbs—though Mr. Tibbs is now in much better circumstances, and has been re-named by his creator Jack Lofty. Garrick had objected to the introduction of Jack on the ground that he was only a distraction. But Goldsmith, whether in writing a novel or a play, was more anxious to represent human nature than to prune a plot, and

paid but little respect to the unities, if only he could arouse our interest. And who is not delighted with this Jack Lofty and his "duchessy" talk—his airs of patronage, his mysterious hints, his gay familiarity with the great, his audacious lying?

"*Lofty*. Waller? Waller? Is he of the house?

*Mrs. Croaker*. The modern poet of that name, sir.

*Lof*. Oh, a modern! We men of business despise the moderns; and as for the ancients, we have no time to read them. Poetry is a pretty thing enough for our wives and daughters; but not for us. Why now, here I stand that know nothing of books. I say, madam, I know nothing of books; and yet, I believe, upon a land-carriage fishery, a stamp act, or a jag-hire, I can talk my two hours without feeling the want of them.

*Mrs. Cro*. The world is no stranger to Mr. Lofty's eminence in every capacity.

*Lof*. I vow to gad, madam, you make me blush. I'm nothing, nothing, nothing in the world; a mere obscure gentleman. To be sure, indeed, one or two of the present ministers are pleased to represent me as a formidable man. I know they are pleased to bespatter me at all their little dirty levees. Yet, upon my soul, I wonder what they see in me to treat me so! Measures, not men, have always been my mark; and I vow, by all that's honourable, my resentment has never done the men, as mere men, any manner of harm—that is, as mere men.

*Mrs. Cro*. What importance, and yet what modesty!

*Lof*. Oh, if you talk of modesty, madam, there, I own, I'm accessible to praise: modesty is my foible: it was so the Duke of Brentford used to say to me. 'I love Jack Lofty,' he used to say: 'no man has a finer knowledge of things; quite a man of information; and when he speaks upon his legs, by the Lord he's prodigious, he scouts them; and yet all men have their faults; too much modesty is his,' says his grace.

*Mrs. Cro*.—And yet, I dare say, you don't want assurance when you come to solicit for your friends.

*Lof*. Oh, there indeed I'm in bronze. Apropos! I have just been mentioning Miss Richland's case to a certain personage; we must name no names. When I ask, I am not to be put off, madam. No, no, I take my friend by the button. A fine girl, sir; great justice in her case. A friend of mine—borough interest—business must be done, Mr. Secretary.—I say, Mr. Secretary, her business must be done, sir. That's my way, madam.

*Mrs. Cro.* Bless me ! you said all this to the Secretary of State, did you ?

*Lof.* I did not say the Secretary, did I ? Well, curse it, since you have found me out, I will not deny it. It was to the Secretary."

Strangely enough, what may now seem to some of us the very best scene in the *Good-natured Man*—the scene, that is, in which young Honeywood, suddenly finding Miss Richland without, is compelled to dress up the two bailiffs in possession of his house and introduce them to her as gentlemen friends—was very nearly damning the play on the first night of its production. The pit was of opinion that it was "low;" and subsequently the critics took up the cry, and professed themselves to be so deeply shocked by the vulgar humours of the bailiffs that Goldsmith had to cut them out. But on the opening night the anxious author, who had been rendered nearly distracted by the cries and hisses produced by this scene, was somewhat reassured when the audience began to laugh again over the tribulations of Mr. Croaker. To the actor who played the part he expressed his warm gratitude when the piece was over, assuring him that he had exceeded his own conception of the character, and that "the fine comic richness of his colouring made it almost appear as new to him as to any other person in the house."

The new play had been on the whole favourably received; and, when Goldsmith went along afterwards to the club, his companions were doubtless not at all surprised to find him in good spirits. He was even merrier than usual; and consented to sing his favourite ballad about the Old Woman tossed in a Blanket. But those hisses and cries were still ranking in his memory; and he himself subsequently confessed that he was "suffering horrid tortures." Nay, when the other members of the club had gone, leaving him and Johnson together, he "burst out a crying, and even swore by—that he would never write again." When Goldsmith told this story in after days, Johnson

was naturally astonished ; perhaps—himself not suffering much from an excessive sensitiveness—he may have attributed that little burst of hysterical emotion to the excitement of the evening increased by a glass or two of punch, and determined therefore never to mention it. “ All which, Doctor,” he said, “ I thought had been a secret between you and me ; and I am sure I would not have said anything about it for the world.” Indeed there was little to cry over, either in the first reception of the piece or in its subsequent fate. With the offending bailiffs cut out, the comedy would seem to have been very fairly successful. The proceeds of three of the evenings were Goldsmith’s payment ; and in this manner he received £400. Then Griffin published the play ; and from this source Goldsmith received an additional £100 ; so that altogether he was very well paid for his work. Moreover he had appealed against the judgment of the pit and the dramatic critics, by printing in the published edition the bailiff scene which had been removed from the stage ; and the *Monthly Review* was so extremely kind as to say that “ the bailiff and his blackguard follower appeared intolerable on the stage, yet we are not disgusted with them in the perusal.” Perhaps we have grown less scrupulous since then ; but at all events it would be difficult for anybody nowadays to find anything but good-natured fun in that famous scene. There is an occasional “ damn,” it is true : but then English officers have always been permitted that little playfulness, and these two gentlemen were supposed to “ serve in the Fleet ;” while if they had been particularly refined in their speech and manner, how could the author have aroused Miss Richland’s suspicions ? It is possible that the two actors who played the bailiff and his follower may have introduced some vulgar “ gag” into their parts ; but there is no warranty for anything of the kind in the play as we now read it.

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## CHAPTER XIII.

## GOLDSMITH IN SOCIETY.

THE appearance of the *Good-natured Man* ushered in a halcyon period in Goldsmith's life. The *Traveller* and the *Vicar* had gained for him only reputation : this new comedy put £500 in his pocket. Of course that was too big a sum for Goldsmith to have about him long. Four-fifths of it he immediately expended on the purchase and decoration of a set of chambers in Brick Court Middle Temple ; with the remainder he appears to have begun a series of entertainments in this new abode, which were perhaps more remarkable for their mirth than their decorum. There was no sort of frolic in which Goldsmith would not indulge for the amusement of his guests ; he would sing them songs ; he would throw his wig to the ceiling ; he would dance a minuet. And then they had cards, forfeits, blind-man's-buff, until Mr. Blackstone, then engaged on his *Commentaries* in the rooms below, was driven nearly mad by the uproar. These parties would seem to have been of a most nondescript character—chance gatherings of any obscure authors or actors whom he happened to meet ; but from time to time there were more formal entertainments, at which Johnson, Percy, and similar distinguished persons were present. Moreover, Dr. Goldsmith himself was much asked out to dinner too ; and so, not content with the “Tyrian bloom, satin grain and garter, blue-silk breeches,” which Mr. Filby had provided for the evening of the production of the comedy, he now had another suit “lined with silk, and gold buttons, that he might appear in proper guise. Then he had his airs of consequence too. This was his answer to an invitation from Kelly, who was his rival of the hour : “I would

with pleasure accept your kind invitation, but to tell you the truth, my dear boy, my *Traveller* has found me a home in so many places, that I am engaged, I believe, three days. Let me see. To-day I dine with Edmund Burke, to-morrow with Dr. Nugent, and the next day with Topham Beauclerc; but I'll tell you what I'll do for you, I'll dine with you on Saturday." Kelly told this story as against Goldsmith; but surely there is not so much ostentation in the reply. Directly after *Tristram Shandy* was published, Sterne found himself fourteen deep in dinner engagements; why should not the author of the *Traveller* and the *Vicar* and the *Good-natured Man* have his engagements also? And perhaps it was but right that Mr. Kelly, who was after all only a critic and scribbler, though he had written a play which was for the moment enjoying an undeserved popularity, should be given to understand that Dr. Goldsmith was not to be asked to a hole-and-corner shop at a moment's notice. To-day he dines with Mr. Burke; to-morrow with Dr. Nugent; the day after with Mr. Beauclerc. If you wish to have the honour of his company, you may choose a day after that; and then, with his new wig, with his coat of Tyrian bloom and blue silk breeches, with a smart sword at his side, his gold-headed cane in his hand, and his hat under his elbow, he will present himself in due course. Dr. Goldsmith is announced, and makes his grave bow: this is the man of genius about whom all the town is talking; the friend of Burke, of Reynolds, of Johnson, of Hogarth; this is not the ragged Irishman who was some time ago earning a crust by running errands for an apothecary.

Goldsmith's grand airs, however, were assumed but seldom; and they never imposed on anybody. His acquaintances treated him with a familiarity which testified rather to his good nature than to their good taste. Now and again, indeed, he was prompted to resent this familiarity; but the effort was not successful. In the "high jinks" to which he good-humoredly

resorted for the entertainment of his guests he permitted a freedom which it was afterwards not very easy to discard ; and as he was always ready to make a butt of himself for the amusement of his friends and acquaintances, it came to be recognized that anybody was allowed to play off a joke on " Goldy." The jokes, such of them as have been put on record, are of the poorest sort. The horse-collar is never far off. One gladly turns from these dismal humours of the tavern and the club to the picture of Goldsmith's enjoying what he called a " Shoemaker's Holiday " in the company of one or two chosen intimates. Goldsmith, baited and bothered by the wits of a public-house, became a different being when he had assumed the guidance of a small party of chosen friends bent on having a day's frugal pleasure. We are indebted to one Cooke, a neighbour of Goldsmith's in the Temple, not only for a more interesting description of one of those shoemaker's holidays, but also for the knowledge that Goldsmith had even now begun writing the *Deserted Village*, which was not published till 1770, two years later. Goldsmith, though he could turn out plenty of manufactured stuff for the booksellers, worked slowly at the special story or poem with which he meant to " strike for honest fame." This Mr. Cooke, calling on him one morning, discovered that Goldsmith had that day written these ten lines of the *Deserted Village* :

" Dear lovely bowers of innocence and ease,  
Seats of my youth, when every sport could please,  
How often have I loitered o'er thy green,  
Where humble happiness endeared each scene !  
How often have I paused on every charm,  
The sheltered cot, the cultivated farm,  
The never-failing brook, the busy mill,  
The decent church, that topt the neighbouring hill,  
The hawthorn bush, with seats beneath the shade,  
For talking age and whispering lovers made ! "



"Come," said he, "let me tell you this is no bad morning's work; and now, my dear boy, if you are not better engaged, I should be glad to enjoy a shoemaker's holiday with you." "A shoemaker's holiday," continues the writer of these reminiscences, "was a day of great festivity to poor Goldsmith, and was spent in the following innocent manner. Three or four of his intimate friends rendezvoused at his chambers to breakfast about ten o'clock in the morning; at eleven they proceeded by the City Road and through the fields to Highbury Barn to dinner; about six o'clock in the evening they adjourned to White Conduit House to drink tea; and concluded by supping at the Grecian or Temple Exchange coffee-house or at the Globe in Fleet Street. There was a very good ordinary of two dishes and pastry kept at Highbury Barn about this time at tenpence per head, including a penny to the waiter; and the company generally consisted of literary characters, a few Templars, and some citizens who had left off trade. The whole expenses of the day's fete never exceeded a crown, and oftener were from three-and-sixpence to four shillings; for which the party obtained good air and exercise, good living, the example of simple manners, and good conversation."

It would have been well indeed for Goldsmith had he been possessed of sufficient strength of character to remain satisfied with these simple pleasures, and to have lived the quiet and modest life of a man of letters on such income as he could derive from the best work he could produce. But it is this same Mr. Cooke who gives decisive testimony as to Goldsmith's increasing desire to "shine" by imitating the expenditure of the great; the natural consequence of which was that he only plunged himself into a morass of debt, advances, contracts for hack-work, and misery. "His debts rendered him at times so melancholy and dejected, that I am sure he felt himself a very unhappy man." Perhaps it was

with some sudden resolve to flee from temptation, and grapple with the difficulties that beset him, that he, in conjunction with another Temple neighbour, Mr. Bott, rented a cottage some eight miles down the Edgware Road; and here he set to work on the *History of Rome*, which he was writing for Davies. Apart from this hack-work, now rendered necessary by his debt, it is probable that one strong inducement leading him to this occasional seclusion was the progress he might be able to make with the *Deserted Village*. Amid all his town gaieties and country excursions, amid his dinners and suppers and dances, his borrowings, and contracts, and the hurried literary produce of the moment, he never forgot what was due to his reputation as an English poet. The journalistic bullies of the day might vent their spleen and envy on him; his best friends might smile at his conversational failures; the wits of the tavern might put up the horse-collar as before; but at least he had the consolation of his art. No one better knew than himself the value of those finished and musical lines he was gradually adding to the beautiful poem, the grace, and sweetness, and tender, pathetic charm of which make it one of the literary treasures of the English people.

The sorrows of debt were not Goldsmith's only trouble at this time. For some reason or other he seems to have become the especial object of spiteful attack on the part of the literary cut-throats of the day. And Goldsmith, though he might listen with respect to the wise advice of Johnson on such matters, was never able to cultivate Johnson's habit of absolute indifference to anything that might be said or sung of him. "The Kenricks, Campbells, MacNicols, and Hendersons," says Lord Macaulay speaking of Johnson, "did their best to annoy him, in the hope that he would give them importance by answering them. But the reader will in vain search his works for any allusion to Kenrick or Campbell, to MacNicol or Henderson. One Scotchman, bent on vindicating the fame of

Scotch learning, defied him to the combat in detestable Latin hexameter—

‘*Maxime, si tu vis, cupio contendere tecum.*’

But Johnson took no notice of the challenge. He had learned, both from his own observation and from literary history, in which he was deeply read, that the place of books in the public estimation is fixed, not by what is written about them, but by what is written in them; and that an author whose works are likely to live, is very unwise if he stoops to wrangle with detractors whose works are certain to die. He always maintained that fame was a shuttlecock which could be kept up only by being beaten back, as well as beaten forward, and which would soon fall if there were only one battledore. No saying was oftener in his mouth than that fine apophthegm of Bentley, that no man was ever written down but by himself.”

It was not given to Goldsmith to feel “like the Monument” on any occasion whatsoever. He was anxious to have the esteem of his friends; he was sensitive to a degree: denunciation or malice, begotten of envy, that Johnson would have passed unheeded, wounded him to the quick, “The insults to which he had to submit,” Thackeray wrote with a quick and warm sympathy, “are shocking to read of—slander, contumely, vulgar satire, brutal malignity perverting his commonest motives and actions; he had his share of these, and one’s anger is roused at reading of them, as it is at seeing a woman insulted or a child assaulted, at the notion that a creature so very gentle, and weak, and full of love should have had to suffer so.” Goldsmith’s revenge, his defence of himself, his appeal to the public, were the *Traveller*, the *Vicar of Wakefield*, the *Deserted Village*; but these came at long intervals; and in the meantime he had to bear with the anonymous malignity that pursued him as best he might. No doubt, when Burke was entertaining him at dinner; and when Johnson was openly deferring to him in conversation

at the club ; and when Reynolds was painting his portrait, he could afford to forget Mr Kenrick and the rest of the libelling clan.

The occasions on which Johnson deferred to Goldsmith in conversation were no doubt few ; but at all events the bludgeon of the great Cham would appear to have come down less frequently on "honest Goldy" than on the other members of that famous coterie. It could come down heavily enough. "Sir," said an incautious person, "drinking drives away care, and makes us forget whatever is disagreeable. Would not you allow a man to drink for that reason?" "Yes, sir," was the reply, "if he sat next *you*." Johnson, however, was considerate towards Goldsmith, partly because of his affection for him, and partly because he saw under what disadvantages Goldsmith entered the lists. For one thing, the conversation of those evenings would seem to have drifted continually into the mere definition of phrases, Now Johnson had spent years of his life, during the compilation of his dictionary, in doing nothing else but defining ; and, whenever the dispute took a phraseological turn, he had it all his own way. Goldsmith, on the other hand, was apt to become confused in his eager self-consciousness. "Goldsmith," said Johnson to Boswell, "should not be for ever attempting to shine in conversation ; he has not temper for it, he is so much mortified when he fails. . . . When he contends, if he gets the better, it is a very little addition to a man of his literary reputation ; if he does not get the better, he is miserably vexed." Boswell, nevertheless, admits that Goldsmith was "often very fortunate in his witty contests, even when he entered the lists with Johnson himself," and goes on to tell how Goldsmith, relating the fable of the little fishes who petitioned Jupiter, and perceiving that Johnson was laughing at him, immediately said, "Why, Dr. Johnson, this is not so easy as you seem to think ; for if you were to make little fishes talk, they would talk like **WHALES**." Who but Goldsmith would have

dared to play jokes on the sage? At supper they have rumps and kidneys. The sage expresses his approval of "the pretty little things;" but profoundly observes that one must eat a good many of them before being satisfied. "Ay, but how many of them," asks Goldsmith, "would reach to the moon?" The sage professes his ignorance; and, indeed, remarks that that would exceed even Goldsmith's calculations; when the practical joker observes, "Why, *one*, sir, if it were long enough." Johnson was completely beaten on this occasion. "Well, sir, I have deserved it. I should not have provoked so foolish an answer by so foolish a question."

It was Johnson himself, moreover, who told the story of Goldsmith and himself being in Poet's Corner; of his saying to Goldsmith

"*Forsitan et nostrum nomen miscebitur istis,*"

and of Goldsmith subsequently repeating the quotation when, having walked towards Fleet Street, they were confronted by the heads on Temple Bar. Even when Goldsmith was opinionated and wrong, Johnson's contradiction was in a manner gentle. "If you put a tub full of blood into a stable the horses are like to go mad," observed Goldsmith. "I doubt that," was Johnson's reply. "Nay, sir, it is a fact well authenticated." Here Thrale interposed to suggest that Goldsmith should have the experiment tried in the stable; but Johnson merely said that, if Goldsmith began making these experiments, he would never get his book written at all. Occasionally, of course, Goldsmith was tossed and gored just like another. "But, sir," he had ventured to say, in opposition to Johnson, "when people live together who have something as to which they disagree, and which they want to shun, they will be in the situation mentioned in the story of Bluebeard, 'You may look into all the chambers but one.' But we should have the greatest inclination to look into that chamber, to talk of that subject."

Here, according to Boswell, Johnson answered in a loud voice, "Sir, I am not saying that *you* could live in friendship with a man from whom you differ as to one point; I am only saying that *I* could do it." But then again he could easily obtain pardon from the gentle Goldsmith for any occasional rudeness. One evening they had a sharp passage of arms at dinner; and thereafter the company adjourned to the Club, where Goldsmith sate silent and depressed. "Johnson perceived this," says Boswell, "and said aside to some of us, 'I'll make Goldsmith forgive me'; and then called to him in a loud voice, 'Dr. Goldsmith, something passed to-day where you and I dined: I ask your pardon.' Goldsmith answered placidly, 'It must be much from you, sir, that I take ill.' And so at once the difference was over, and they were on as easy terms as ever, and Goldsmith rattled away as usual." For the rest, Johnson was the constant and doughty champion of Goldsmith as a man of letters. He would suffer no one to doubt the power and versatility of that genius which he had been amongst the first to recognise and encourage. "Whether, indeed, we take him as a poet, as a comic writer, or as an historian," he announced to an assemblage of distinguished persons met together at dinner at Mr. Beauchamp's, "*he stands in the first class.*" And there was no one living who dared dispute the verdict—at least in Johnson's hearing.

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## CHAPTER XIV.

### THE DESERTED VILLAGE.

BUT it is time to return to the literary performances that gained for this uncouth Irishman so great an amount of consideration from the first men of his time. The engagement with Griffin about the *History of Animated Nature* was made

at the beginning of 1769. The work was to occupy eight volumes; and Dr. Goldsmith was to receive eight hundred guineas for the complete copyright. Whether the undertaking was originally a suggestion of Griffin's, or of Goldsmith's own does not appear. If it was the author's, it was probably only the first means that occurred to him of getting another advance; and that advance—£500 on account—he did actually get. But if it was the suggestion of the publisher, Griffin must have been a bold man. A writer whose acquaintance with animated nature was such as to allow him to make the “insidious tiger” a denizen of the backwoods of Canada,<sup>1</sup> was not a very safe authority. But perhaps Griffin had consulted Johnson before making this bargain; and we know that Johnson, though continually remarking on Goldsmith's extraordinary ignorance of facts, was of opinion that the *History of Animated Nature* would be “as entertaining as a Persian tale.” However, Goldsmith—no doubt after he had spent the five hundred guineas—tackled the work in earnest. When Boswell subsequently went out to call on him at another rural retreat he had taken on the Edgware Road, Boswell and Mickle, the translator of the *Lusiad*, found Goldsmith from home; but, having a curiosity to see his apartment, we went in and found curious scraps of descriptions of animals scrawled upon the wall with a black-lead pencil.” Meanwhile, this *Animated Nature* being in hand, the *Roman History* was published, and was very well received by the critics and by the public. “Goldsmith's abridgment,” Johnson declared, is better than that of Lucius Florus or Eutropius; and I will venture to say that if you compare him with Vertot, in the same places of the *Roman History*, you will find that he excels Vertot. Sir, he has the art of compiling, and of saying everything he has to say in a pleasing manner.”

So thought the booksellers too; and the success of the *Roman*

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<sup>1</sup>See *Citizen of the World*, Letter XVII.

*History* only involved him in fresh projects of compilation. By an offer of £500 Davies induced him to lay aside for the moment the *Animated Nature* and begin "An History of England, from the Birth of the British Empire to the Death of George the Second, in four volumes octavo." He also about this time undertook to write a Life of Thomas Parnell. Here, indeed, was plenty of work, and work promising good pay; but the depressing thing is that Goldsmith should have been the man who had to do it. He may have done it better than any one else could have done—indeed, looking over the results of all that drudgery, we recognize now the happy turns of expression which were never long absent from Goldsmith's prose-writing—but the world could well afford to sacrifice all the task-work thus got through for another poem like the *Deserted Village* or the *Traveller*. Perhaps Goldsmith considered he was making a fair compromise when, for the sake of his reputation, he devoted a certain portion of his time to his poetical work, and then, to have money for fine clothes and high jinks, gave the rest to the booksellers. One critic, on the appearance of the *Roman History*, referred to the *Traveller*, and remarked that it was a pity that the "author of one of the best poems that has appeared since those of Mr. Pope, should not apply wholly to works of imagination." We may echo that regret now; but Goldsmith would at the time have no doubt replied that, if he had trusted to his poems, he would never have been able to pay £400 for chambers in the Temple. In fact he said as much to Lord Lisburn at one of the Academy dinners: "I cannot afford to court the draggle-tail muses, my Lord; they would let me starve; but by my other labours I can make shift to eat, and drink, and have good clothes." And there is little use in our regretting now that Goldsmith was not cast in a more heroic mould; we have to take him as he is; and be grateful for what he has left us.

It is a grateful relief to turn from these booksellers' contracts



and forced labours to the sweet clear note of singing that one finds in the *Deserted Village*. This poem, after having been repeatedly announced and as often withdrawn for further revision, was at last published on the 26th of May, 1770, when Goldsmith was in his forty-second year. The leading idea of it he had already thrown out in certain lines in the *Traveller* :—

“ Have we not seen, round Britain’s peopled shore,  
Her useful sons exchanged for useless ore ?  
Seen all her triumphs but destruction haste,  
Like flaring tapers brightening as they waste ?  
Seen opulence, her grandeur to maintain,  
Lead stern depopulation in her train,  
And over fields where scattered hamlets rose  
In barren solitary pomp repose ?  
Have we not seen at pleasure’s lordly call  
The smiling long-frequented village fall ?  
Beheld the duteous son, the sire decayed,  
The modest matron, and the blushing maid,  
Forced from their homes, a melancholy train,  
To traverse climes beyond the western main ;  
Where wild Oswego spreads her swamps around,  
And Niagara stuns with thundering sound ? ”

—and elsewhere, in recorded conversations of his, we find that he had somehow got it into his head that the accumulation of wealth in a country was the parent of all evils, including depopulation. We need not stay here to discuss Goldsmith’s position as a political economist ; even although Johnson seems to sanction his theory in the four lines he contributed to the end of the poem. Nor is it worth while returning to that objection of Lord Macaulay’s which has already been mentioned in these pages, further than to repeat that the poor Irish village in which Goldsmith was brought up, no doubt looked to him as charming as any Auburn, when he regarded it through the softening and beautifying mist of years. It is enough that the

abandonment by a number of poor people of the homes in which they and theirs had lived their lives, is one of the most pathetic facts in our civilisation; and that out of the various circumstances surrounding this forced migration Goldsmith has made one of the most graceful and touching poems in the English language. It is clear bird-singing, but there is a pathetic note in it. That imaginary ramble through the Lissoy that is far away has recalled more than his boyish sports; it has made him look back over his own life—the life of an exile.

“I still had hopes, my latest hours to crown,  
 Amidst these humble bowers to lay me down;  
 To husband out life's taper at the close,  
 And keep the flame from wasting by repose:  
 I still had hopes, for pride attends us still,  
 Amidst the swains to show my book-learned skill,  
 Around my fire an evening group to draw,  
 And tell of all I felt, and all I saw;  
 And, as a hare whom hounds and horns pursue  
 Pants to the place from whence at first he flew,  
 I still had hopes, my long vexations past,  
 Here to return—and die at home at last.”

Who can doubt that it was of Lissoy he was thinking? Sir Walter Scott, writing a generation ago, said that “the church which tops the neighbouring hill,” the mill and the brook were still to be seen in the Irish village; and that even

“The hawthorn bush with seats beneath the shade  
 For talking age and whispering lovers made,”

had been identified by the indefatigable tourist, and was of course being cut to pieces to make souvenirs. But indeed it is of little consequence whether we say that Auburn is an English village, or insist that it is only Lissoy idealized, as long as the thing is true in itself. And we know that this is true; it is not that one sees the place as a picture, but that one

seems to be breathing its very atmosphere, and listening to the various cries that thrill the "hollow silence."

"Sweet was the sound, when oft at evening's close,  
Up yonder hill the village murmur rose.  
There, as I passed with careless steps and slow,  
The mingling notes came softened from below ;  
The swain responsive as the milk-maid sung,  
The sober herd that lowed to meet their young,  
The noisy geese that gabbled o'er the pool,  
The playful children just let loose from school,  
The watch-dog's voice that bayed the whispering wind,  
And the loud laugh that spake the vacant mind."

Nor is it any romantic and impossible peasantry that is gradually brought before us. There are no Norvals in Lissoy. There is the old woman—Catherine Geraghty, they say, was her name—who gathered cresses in the ditches near her cabin. There is the village preacher whom Mrs. Hodson, Goldsmith's sister, took to be a portrait of their father ; but whom others have identified as Henry Goldsmith, and even as the uncle Contarine : they may all have contributed. And then comes Paddy Byrne. Amid all the pensive tenderness of the poem this description of the schoolmaster, with its strokes of demure humour, is introduced with delightful effect.

"Beside yon struggling fence that skirts the way,  
With blossom'd furze unprofitably gay,  
There, in his noisy mansion, skilled to rule,  
The village master taught his little school.  
A man severe he was, and stern to view ;  
I knew him well, and every truant knew :  
Well had the boding tremblers learned to trace  
The day's disasters in his morning face ;  
Full well they laughed with counterfeited glee  
At all his jokes, for many a joke had he ;  
Full well the busy whisper circling round  
Conveyed the dismal tidings when he frowned.  
Yet he was kind, or, if severe in aught,

The love he bore to learning was in fault ;  
 The village all declared how much he knew :  
 'Twas certain he could write, and cipher too :  
 Lands he could measure, terms and tides presage,  
 And e'en the story ran that he could gauge :  
 In arguing, too, the parson owned his skill ;  
 For e'en though vanquished, he could argue still ;  
 While words of learned length and thundering sound  
 Amazed the gazing rustics ranged around ;  
 And still they gazed, and still the wonder grew  
 That one small head could carry all he knew."

All this is so simple and natural that we cannot fail to believe in the reality of Auburn, or Lissoy, or whatever the village may be supposed to be. We visit the clergyman's cheerful fireside ; and look in on the noisy school ; and sit in the evening in the ale-house to listen to the profound politics talked there. But the crisis comes. Auburn *delenda est*. Here, no doubt, occurs the least probable part of the poem. Poverty of soil is a common cause of emigration ; land that produces oats (when it can produce oats at all) three-fourths mixed with weeds, and hay chiefly consisting of rushes, naturally discharges its surplus population as families increase ; and though the wrench of parting is painful enough, the usual result is a change from starvation to competence. It more rarely happens that a district of peace and plenty, such as Auburn was supposed to see around it, is depopulated to add to a great man's estate.

" The man of wealth and pride  
 Takes up a space that many poor supplied ;  
 Space for his lake, his park's extended bounds,  
 Space for his horses, equipage, and hounds :  
 \* \* \* \* \*  
 His seat, where solitary sports are seen,  
 Indignant spurns the cottage from the green : "

—and so forth. This seldom happens ; but it does happen ;

and it has happened, in our own day, in England. It is within the last twenty years that an English landlord, having faith in his riches, bade a village to be removed and cast elsewhere, so that it should no longer be visible from his windows: and it was forthwith removed. But any solitary instance like this is not sufficient to support the theory that wealth and luxury are inimical to the existence of a hardy peasantry; and so we must admit, after all, that it is poetical exigency rather than political economy that has decreed the destruction of the loveliest village of the plain. Where, asks the poet, are the driven poor to find refuge, when even the fenceless commons are seized upon and divided by the rich? In the great cities?—

“ To see profusion that he must not share ;  
 To see ten thousand baneful arts combined  
 To pamper luxury and thin mankind.”

It is in this description of a life in cities that there occurs an often-quoted passage, which has in it one of the most perfect lines in English poetry :—

“ Ah, turn thine eyes  
 Where the poor houseless shivering female lies.  
 She once, perhaps, in village plenty blest,  
 Has wept at tales of innocence distress ;  
 Her modest looks the cottage might adorn,  
 Sweet as the primrose peeps beneath the thorn ;  
 Now lost to all ; her friends, her virtue fled,  
 Near her betrayer's door she lays her head.  
 And, pinch'd with cold, and shrinking from the shower,  
 With heavy heart deplores that luckless hour,  
 When idly first, ambitious of the town,  
 She left her wheel and robes of country brown.”

Goldsmith wrote in a pre-Wordsworthian age, when, even in the realms of poetry, a primrose was not much more than a primrose; but it is doubtful whether, either before, during, or since Wordsworth's time the sentiment that the imagination

can infuse into the common and familiar things around us ever received more happy expression than in the well-known line,

*" Sweet as the primrose peeps beneath the thorn."*

No one has as yet succeeded in defining accurately and concisely what poetry is ; but at all events this line is surcharged with a certain quality which is conspicuously absent in such a production as the *Essay on Man*. Another similar line is to be found further on in the description of the distant scenes to which the proscribed people are driven :

*" Through torrid tracts with fainting steps they go,  
Where wild Altama murmurs to their woe."*

Indeed, the pathetic side of emigration has never been so powerfully presented to us as in this poem—

*" When the poor exiles, every pleasure past,  
Hung round the bowers, and fondly looked their last,  
And took a long farewell, and wished in vain  
For seats like these beyond the western main,  
And shuddering still to face the distant deep,  
Returned and wept, and still returned to weep.*

\* \* \* \* \*

*Even now, methinks, as pondering here I stand,  
I see the rural virtues leave the land,  
Down where yon anchoring vessel spreads the sail,  
That idly waiting flaps with every gale,  
Downward they move a melancholy band,  
Pass from the shore, and darken all the strand.  
Contented toil, and hospitable care,  
And kind-connubial tenderness are there ;  
And piety with wishes placed above,  
And steady loyalty, and faithful love."*

And worst of all, in this imaginative departure, we find that Poetry herself is leaving our shores. She is now to try her voice

*" On Torno's cliffs, or Pambamarca's side ; "*

and the poet, in the closing lines of the poem, bids her passionate and tender farewell :—

“ And thou, sweet Poetry, thou loveliest maid,  
Still first to fly where sensual joys invade ;  
Unfit in these degenerate times of shame  
To catch the heart, or strike for honest fame ;  
Dear charming nymph, neglected and decried,  
My shame in crowds, my solitary pride ;  
Thou source of all my bliss, and all my woe,  
That found'st me poor at first, and keep'st me so ;  
Thou guide, by which the nobler arts excel,  
Thou nurse of every virtue, fare thee well !  
Farewell, and O ! where'er thy voice be tried,  
On Torno's cliffs, or Pambamarca's side,  
Whether where equinoctial fervours glow,  
Or winter wraps the polar world in snow,  
Still let thy voice, prevailing over time,  
Redress the rigours of the inclement clime ;  
Aid slighted truth with thy persuasive strain ;  
Teach erring man to spurn the rage of gain :  
Teach him, that states of native strength possess,  
Though very poor, may still be very blest ;  
That trade's proud empire hastes to swift decay,  
As ocean sweeps the laboured mole away :  
While self-dependent power can time defy,  
As rocks resist the billows and the sky.”

So ends this graceful, melodious, tender poem, the position of which in English literature, and in the estimation of all who love English literature, has not been disturbed by any fluctuations of literary fashion. We may give more attention at the moment to the new experiments of the poetic method ; but we return only with renewed gratitude to the old familiar strain, not the least merit of which is that it has nothing about it of foreign tricks or graces. In English literature there is nothing more thoroughly English than these writings produced by an Irishman. And whether or not it was Paddy Byrne and Catherine Geraghty, and the Lissoy ale-house that Goldsmith

had in his mind when he was writing the poem, is not of much consequence: the manner and language and feeling are all essentially English; so that we never think of calling Goldsmith anything but an English poet.

The poem met with great and immediate success. Of course everything that Dr. Goldsmith now wrote was read by the public; he had not to wait for the recommendation of the reviews; but, in this case, even the reviews had scarcely anything but praise in the welcome of his new book. It was dedicated, in graceful and ingenious terms, to Sir Joshua Reynolds, who returned the compliment by painting a picture and placing on the engraving of it this description: "This attempt to express a character in the *Deserted Village* is dedicated to Dr. Goldsmith by his sincere friend and admirer, Sir Joshua Reynolds." What Goldsmith got from Griffin for the poem is not accurately known; and this is a misfortune, for the knowledge would have enabled us to judge whether at that time it was possible for a poet to court the draggle-tail muses without risk of starvation. But if fame were his chief object in the composition of the poem, he was sufficiently rewarded; and it is to be surmised that by this time the people in Ireland—no longer implored to get subscribers—had heard of the proud position won by the vagrant youth who had "taken the world for his pillow" some eighteen years before.

That his own thoughts had sometimes wandered back to the scenes and friends of his youth during this labour of love, we know from his letters. In January of this year, while as yet the *Deserted Village* was not quite through the press, he wrote to his brother Maurice; and expressed himself as most anxious to hear all about the relatives from whom he had been so long parted. He has something to say about himself too; wishes it to be known that the King has lately been pleased to make him Professor of Ancient History "in a Royal Academy of Painting which he has just established;" but gives no very flourishing



account of his circumstances. "Honours to one in my situation are something like ruffles to a man that wants a shirt." However there is some small legacy of fourteen or fifteen pounds left him by his uncle Contarine, which he understands to be in the keeping of his cousin Lawder; and to this wealth he is desirous of foregoing all claim; his relations must settle how it may be best expended. But there is not a reference to his literary achievements, or the position won by them; not the slightest yielding to even a pardonable vanity; it is a modest, affectionate letter. The only hint that Maurice Goldsmith receives of the esteem in which his brother is held in London, is contained in a brief mention of Johnson, Burke, and others as his friends. "I have sent my cousin Jenny a miniature picture of myself, as I believe it is the most acceptable present I can offer. I have ordered it to be left for her at George Faulkenor's, folded in a letter. The face, you well know, is ugly enough; but it is finely painted. I will shortly also send my friends over the Shannon some mezzotinto prints of myself, and some more of my friends here, such as Burke, Johnson, Reynolds, and Colman. I believe I have written an hundred letters to different friends in your country, and never received an answer from any of them. I do not know how to account for this, or why they are unwilling to keep up for me those regards which I must ever retain for them." The letter winds up with an appeal for news, news, news.

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## CHAPTER XV.

### OCCASIONAL WRITINGS.

SOME two months after the publication of the *Deserted Village*, when its success had been well assured, Goldsmith proposed to himself the relaxation of a little Continental tour; and

he was accompanied by three ladies, Mrs. Horneck and her two pretty daughters, who doubtless took more charge of him than he did of them. This Mrs. Horneck, the widow of a certain Captain Horneck, was connected with Reynolds, while Burke was the guardian of the two girls; so that it was natural that they should make the acquaintance of Dr. Goldsmith. A foolish attempt has been made to weave out of the relations supposed to exist between the younger of the girls and Goldsmith an imaginary romance; but there is not the slightest actual foundation for anything of the kind. Indeed the best guide we can have to the friendly and familiar terms on which he stood with regard to the Hornecks and their circle, is the following careless and jocular reply to a chance invitation sent him by the two sisters :—

“ Your mandate I got,  
 You may all go to pot ;  
 Had your senses been right,  
 You'd have sent before night ;  
 As I hope to be saved,  
 I put off being shaved ;  
 For I could not make bold,  
 While the matter was cold,  
 To meddle in suds,  
 Or to put on my duds ;  
 So tell Horneck and Nesbitt,  
 And Baker and his bit,  
 And Kauffman beside,  
 And the Jessamy bride ;  
 With the rest of the crew,  
 The Reynoldses two,  
 Little Comedy's face  
 And the Captain in lace.

\* \* \* \*

Yet how can I when vex't  
 Thus stray from my text ?  
 Tell each other to rue  
 Your Devonshire crew,

For sending so late  
To one of my state.  
But 'tis Reynolds's way  
From wisdom to stray,  
And Angelica's whim  
To be frolic like him.

But, alas ! your good worships, how could they be wiser,  
When both have been spoiled in to-day's *Advertiser* ? ”

“The Jessamy Bride” was the pet nickname he had bestowed on the younger Miss Horneck—the heroine of the speculative romance just mentioned ; “Little Comedy” was her sister ; “The Captain in lace” their brother, who was in the Guards. No doubt Mrs. Horneck and her daughters were very pleased to have with them on this Continental trip so distinguished a person as Dr. Goldsmith ; and he must have been very ungrateful if he was not glad to be provided with such charming companions. The story of the sudden envy he displayed of the admiration excited by the two handsome young Englishwomen as they stood at a hotel-window in Lille, is so incredibly foolish that it needs scarcely be repeated here ; unless to repeat the warning that, if ever anybody was so dense as not to see the humour of that piece of acting, one had, better look with grave suspicion on every one of the stories told about Goldsmith's vanities and absurdities.

Even with such pleasant companions, the trip to Paris was not everything he had hoped. “I find,” he wrote to Reynolds from Paris, “that travelling at twenty and at forty are very different things. I set out with all my confirmed habits about me, and can find nothing on the Continent so good as when I formerly left it. One of our chief amusements here is scolding at everything we meet with, and praising every thing and every person we left at home. You may judge therefore whether your name is not frequently bandied at table among us. To tell you the truth, I never thought I could regret your absence so much, as our various mortifications on the road have often

taught me to do. I could tell you of disasters and adventures without number, of our lying in barns, and of my being half poisoned with a dish of green peas, of our quarreling with postilions and being cheated by our landladies, but I reserve all this for a happy hour which I expect to share with you upon my return." The fact is that although Goldsmith had seen a good deal of foreign travel, the manner of his making the grand tour in his youth was not such as to fit him for acting as courier to a party of ladies. However, if they increased his troubles, they also shared them ; and in this same letter he bears explicit testimony to the value of their companionship. "I will soon be among you, better pleased with my situation at home than I ever was before. And yet I must say, that if anything could make France pleasant, the very good women with whom I am at present would certainly do it. I could say more about that, but I intend showing them this letter before I send it away." Mrs. Horneck, *Little Comedy*, the *Jessamy Bride*, and the Professor of Ancient History at the Royal Academy, all returned to London ; the last to resume his round of convivialities at taverns, excursions into regions of more fashionable amusement along with Reynolds, and task-work aimed at the pockets of the booksellers.

It was a happy-go-lucky sort of life. We find him now showing off his fine clothes and his sword and wig at Ranelagh Gardens, and again shut up in his chambers compiling memoirs and histories in hot haste ; now the guest of Lord Clare, and figuring at Bath, and again delighting some small domestic circle by his quips and cranks ; playing jokes for the amusement of children, and writing comic letters in verse to their elders ; everywhere and at all times merry, thoughtless good natured. And, of course, we find also his humorous pleasantries being mistaken for blundering stupidity. In perfect good faith Boswell describes how a number of people burst out laughing when Goldsmith publicly complained that he had met Lord

Camden at Lord Clare's house in the country, "and he took no more notice of me than if I had been an ordinary man." Goldsmith's claiming to be a very extraordinary person was precisely a stroke of that humourous self-depreciation in which he was continually indulging; and the Jessamy Bride has left it on record that "on many occasions, from the peculiar manner of his humour, and assumed frown of countenance, what was often uttered in jest was mistaken by those who did not know him for earnest." This would appear to have been one of those occasions. The company burst out laughing at Goldsmith's having made a fool of himself; and Johnson was compelled to come to his rescue. "Nay, gentlemen, Dr. Goldsmith is in the right. A nobleman ought to have made up to such a man as Goldsmith; and I think it is much against Lord Camden that he neglected him."

Mention of Lord Clare naturally recalls the *Haunch of Venison*. Goldsmith was particularly happy in writing bright and airy verses; the grace and lightness of his touch has rarely been approached. It must be confessed, however, that in this direction he was somewhat of an Autolycus; unconsidered trifles he freely appropriated; but he committed these thefts with scarcely any concealment, and with the most charming air in the world. In fact some of the snatches of verse which he contributed to the *Bee* scarcely profess to be anything else than translations, though the originals are not given. But who is likely to complain when we get as the result such a delightful piece of nonsense as the famous Elegy on that Glory of her Sex, Mrs. Mary Blaize, which has been the parent of a vast progeny since Goldsmith's time?

" Good people all, with one accord,  
Lament for Madam Blaize,  
Who never wanted a good word.  
From those who spoke her praise.

- “ The needy seldom passed her door,  
And always found her kind ;  
She freely lent to all the poor,—  
Who left a pledge behind.
- “ She strove the neighbourhood to please,  
With manners wondrous winning ;  
And never followed wicked ways,—  
Unless when she was sinning.
- “ At church, in silks and satins new,  
With hoop of monstrous size,  
She never slumbered in her pew,—  
But when she shut her eyes.
- “ Her love was sought, I do aver,  
By twenty beaux or more ;  
The king himself has followed her,—  
When she has walked before.
- “ But now her wealth and finery fled,  
Her hangers-on cut short all ;  
The doctors found, when she was dead,—  
Her last disorder mortal.
- “ Let us lament, in sorrow sore,  
For Kent Street well may say,  
That had she lived a twelvemonth more,—  
She had not died to-day.”

The *Haunch of Venison*, on the other hand, is a poetical letter of thanks to Lord Clare—an easy jocular epistle, in which the writer has a cut or two at certain of his literary brethren. Then, as he is looking at the venison, and determining not to send it to any such people as Heffernan or Higgins, who should step in but our old friend Beau Tibbs, or some one remarkably like him in manner and speech?—

- “ While thus I debated, in reverie centered,  
An acquaintance, a friend as he called himself, entered ;  
An under-bred, fine-spoken fellow was he,  
And he smiled as he looked at the venison and me.  
‘ What have we got here?—Why this is good eating !

Your own I suppose—or is it in waiting ?’  
 ‘Why, whose should it be ?’ cried I with a founce ;  
 ‘I get these things often’ but that was a bounce :  
 ‘Some lords, my acquaintance, that settle the nation,  
 Are pleased to be kind, but I hate ostentation.’  
 ‘If that be the case then,’ cried he, very gay,  
 ‘I’m glad I have taken this house in my way.  
 To-morrow you take a poor dinner with me ;  
 No words—I insist on’t—precisely at three ;  
 We’ll have Johnson, and Burke ; all the wits will be there ;  
 My acquaintance is slight, or I’d ask my Lord Clare.  
 And now that I think on’t, as I am a sinner !  
 We wanted this venison to make out the dinner.  
 What say you—a pasty ? It shall and it must,  
 And my wife, little Kitty, is famous for crust.  
 Here, porter ! this venison with me to Mile End ;  
 No stirring—I beg—my dear friend—my dear friend !’  
 Thus, snatching his hat, he brushed off like the wind,  
 And the porter and eatables followed behind.”

We need not follow the vanished venison—which did not make its appearance at the banquet any more than did Johnson or Burke—further than to say that if Lord Clare did not make it good to the poet he did not deserve to have his name associated with such a clever and careless *jeu d’esprit*.

## CHAPTER XVI.

### SHE STOOPS TO CONQUER.

BUT the writing of smart verses could not keep Dr. Goldsmith alive, more especially as dinner-parties, Ranelagh masquerades, and similar diversions pressed heavily on his finances. When his *History of England* appeared, the literary cut-throats of the day accused him of having been bribed by the Govern-

ment to betray the liberties of the people ;\* a foolish charge. What Goldsmith got for the *English History* was the sum originally stipulated for, and now no doubt all spent ; with a further sum of fifty guineas for an abridgment of the work. Then, by this time, he had persuaded Griffin to advance him the whole of the eight hundred guineas for the *Animated Nature*, though he had only done about a third part of the book. At the instigation of Newbery he had begun a story after the manner of the *Vicar of Wakefield* ; but it appears that such chapters as he had written were not deemed to be promising ; and the undertaking was abandoned. The fact is, Goldsmith was now thinking of another method of replenishing his purse. The *Vicar of Wakefield* had brought him little but reputation ; the *Good-Natured Man* had brought him £500. It was to the stage that he now looked for assistance out of the financial slough in which he was plunged. He was engaged in writing a comedy ; and that comedy was *She Stoops to Conquer*.

In the Dedication to Johnson which was prefixed to this play on its appearance in type, Goldsmith hints that the attempt to write a comedy not of a sentimental order then in fashion, was a hazardous thing ; and also that Colman, who saw the piece in its various stages, was of this opinion too. Colman threw cold water on the undertaking from the very beginning. It was only extreme pressure on the part of Goldsmith's friends that induced—or rather compelled—him to accept the comedy ; and that, after he had kept the unfortunate author in the tortures of suspense for month after month. But although Goldsmith knew the danger he was resolved to face it. He hated the sentimentalists and all their works ; and determined to keep his new comedy faithful to nature, whether people called it low or not. His object was to raise a genuine,

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\* "God knows I had no thought for or against liberty in my head ; my whole aim being to make up a book of a decent size that, as Squire Richards says, 'would do no harm to nobody.'"—Goldsmith to Langton, September, 1771.



heartly laugh ; not to write a piece for school declamation ; and he had enough confidence in himself to do the work in his own way. Moreover he took the earliest possible opportunity, in writing this piece, of poking fun at the sensitive creatures who had been shocked by the "vulgarity" of *The Good-Natured Man*. "Bravo! Bravo!" cry the jolly companions of Tony Lumpkin, when that promising buckeen has finished his song at the Three Pigeons ; then follows criticism :

"*First Fellow*. The squire has got spunk in him.

*Second Fel*. I loves to hear him sing, bekeays he never gives us nothing that's low.

*Third Fel*. O damn anything that's low, I cannot bear it.

*Fourth Fel*. The genteel thing is the genteel thing anytime : if so be that a gentleman bees in a concatenation accordingly.

*Third Fel*. I likes the maxum of it, Master Muggins. What, though I am obligated to dance a bear, a man may be a gentleman for all that May this be my poison, if my bear ever dances but to the very genteelest of tunes ; 'Water Parted,' or the 'The Minuet in Ariadne.'

Indeed, Goldsmith, however he might figure in society, was always capable of holding his own when he had his pen in his hand. And even at the outset of this comedy one sees how much he has gained in literary confidence since the writing of the *Good-Natured Man*. Here there is no anxious stiffness at all ; but a brisk, free conversation, full of point that is not too formal, and yet conveying all the information that has usually to be crammed into a first scene. In taking as the ground-work of his plot that old adventure that had befallen himself—his mistaking a squire's house for an inn—he was hampering himself with something that was not the less improbable because it had actually happened ; but we begin to forget all the improbabilities through the naturalness of the people to whom we are introduced, and the brisk movement and life of the piece.

Fashions in dramatic literature may come and go ; but the

wholesome good-natured fun of *She Stoops to Conquer* is as capable of producing a hearty laugh now, as it was when it first saw the light in Covent Garden. Tony Lumpkin is one of the especial favourites of the theatre-going public ; and no wonder. With all the young cub's jibes and jeers, his impudence and grimaces, one has a sneaking love for the scapegrace ; we laugh with him, rather than at him ; how can we fail to enjoy those malevolent tricks of his when he so obviously enjoys them himself ? And Diggory—do we not owe an eternal debt of gratitude to honest Diggory for telling us about Ould Grouse in the gunroom, that immortal joke at which thousands and thousands of people have roared with laughter, though they never any one of them could tell what the story was about ? The scene in which the old squire lectures his faithful attendants on their manners and duties, is one of the truest bits of comedy on the English stage :—

*“ Mr. Hardcastle. But you're not to stand so, with your hands in your pockets. Take your hands from your pockets Roger ; and from your head, you blockhead you. See how Diggory carries his hands. They're a little too stiff, indeed but that's no great matter.*

*Diggory. Ay, mind how I hold them. I learned to hold my hands this way when I was upon drill for the militia. And so being upon drill—*

*Hard. You must not be so talkative, Diggory. You must be all attention to the guests. You must hear us talk, and not think of talking ; you must see us drink, and not think of drinking ; you must see us eat, and not think of eating.*

*Dig. By the laws, your worship, that's perfectly impossible. Whenever Diggory sees yeating going forward, ecod, he's always wishing for a mouthful himself.*

*Hard. Blockhead ! Is not a bellyful in the kitchen as good as a bellyful in the parlour ? Stay your stomach with that reflection.*

*Dig. Ecod, I thank your worship, I'll make a shift to stay my stomach with a slice of cold beef in the pantry.*

*Hard. Diggory, you are too talkative.—Then, if I happen to say a good thing, or tell a good story at table, you must not all burst out a-laughing, as if you made part of the company.*

*Dig.* Then ecod your worship must not tell the story of Ould Grouse in the gunroom : I can't help laughing at that—he ! he ! he !—for the soul of me. We have laughed at that these twenty years—ha ! ha ! ha !

*Hard.* Ha ! ha ! ha ! The story is a good one Well, honest Dig-gory, you may laugh at that—but still remember to be attentive. Suppose one of the company should call for a glass of wine, how will you behave ? A glass of wine, sir, if you please (*to DIGGORY*).—Eh, why don't you move ?

*Dig.* Ecod, your worship, I never have courage till I see the eatables and drinkables brought upo' the table, and then I'm as bauld as a lion.

*Hard.* What, will nobody move ?

*First Serv.* I'm not to leave this pleace.

*Second Serv.* I'm sure it's no pleace of mine.

*Third Serv.* Nor mine, for sartain.

*Dig.* Wauns, and I'm sure it canna be mine."

No doubt all this is very "low" indeed ; and perhaps Mr. Colman may be forgiven for suspecting that the refined wits of the day would be shocked by these rude humours of a parcel of servants. But all that can be said in this direction was said at the time by Horace Walpole, in a letter to a friend of his ; and this criticism is so amusing in its pretence and imbecility that it is worth quoting at large. "Dr. Goldsmith has written a comedy," says this profound critic, "—no, it is the lowest of all farces ; it is not the subject I condemn, though very vulgar, but the execution. The drift tends to no moral, no edification of any kind—the situations, however, are well imagined, and make one laugh in spite of the grossness of the dialogue, the forced witticisms, and total improbability of the whole plan and conduct. But what disgusts me most is, that though the characters are very low, and aim at low humour, not one of them says a sentence that is natural, or marks any character at all." Horace Walpole sighing for edification—from a Covent Garden comedy ! Surely, if the old gods have any laughter left, and if they take any notice of what is done in the literary world here below, there must have rumbled through the courts of Olympus a guffaw of sardonic laughter, when that solemn criticism was put down on paper.

Meanwhile Colman's original fears had developed into a sort of stupid obstinacy. He was so convinced that the play would not succeed, that he would spend no money in putting it on the stage; while far and wide he announced its failure as a foregone conclusion. Under this gloom of vaticination the rehearsals were nevertheless proceeded with—the brunt of the quarrels among the players falling wholly on Goldsmith, for the manager seems to have withdrawn in despair; while all the Johnson confraternity were determined to do what they could for Goldsmith on the opening night. That was the 15th of March, 1773. His friends invited the author to dinner as a prelude to the play; Dr. Johnson was in the chair; there was plenty of gaiety. But this means of keeping up the anxious author's spirits was not very successful. Goldsmith's mouth, we are told by Reynolds, became so parched "from the agitation of his mind, that he was unable to swallow a single mouthful." Moreover, he could not face the ordeal of sitting through the play; when his friends left the tavern and betook themselves to the theatre, he went away by himself; and was subsequently found walking in St. James's Park. The friend who discovered him there persuaded him that his presence in the theatre might be useful in case of an emergency; and ultimately got him to accompany him to Covent Garden. When Goldsmith reached the theatre, the fifth act had been begun.

Oddly enough, the first thing he heard on entering the stage-door was a hiss. The story goes that the poor author was dreadfully frightened; and that in answer to a hurried question, Colman exclaimed, "Psha! Doctor, don't be afraid of a squib, when we have been sitting these two hours on a barrel of gunpowder." If this was meant as a hoax, it was a cruel one; if meant seriously, it was untrue. For the piece had turned out a great hit. From beginning to end of the performance the audience were in a roar of laughter; and the single hiss that Goldsmith unluckily heard was so markedly exceptional,

that it became the talk of the town, and was variously attributed to one or other of Goldsmith's rivals. Colman, too, suffered at the hands of the wits for his gloomy and falsified predictions; and had, indeed, to beg Goldsmith to intercede for him. It is a great pity that Boswell was not in London at this time; for then we might have had a description of the supper that naturally would follow the play, and of Goldsmith's demeanour under this new success. Besides the gratification, moreover, of his choice of materials being approved by the public, there was the material benefit accruing to him from the three "author's nights." These are supposed to have produced nearly five hundred pounds—a substantial sum in those days.

Boswell did not come to London till the second of April following; and the first mention we find of Goldsmith is in connection with an incident which has its ludicrous as well as its regrettable aspect. The further success of *She Stoops to Conquer* was not likely to propitiate the wretched hole-and-corner cut-throats that infested the journalism of that day. More especially was Kenrick driven mad with envy; and so, in a letter addressed to the *London Packet*, this poor creature determined once more to set aside the judgment of the public, and show Dr. Goldsmith in his true colours. The letter is a wretched production, full of personalities only fit for an angry washerwoman, and of rancour without point. But there was one passage in it that effectually roused Goldsmith's rage; for here the Jessamy Bride was introduced as "the lovely H—k." The letter was anonymous; but the publisher of the print, a man called Evans, was known; and so Goldsmith thought he would go and give Evans a beating. If he had asked Johnson's advice about the matter, he would no doubt have been told to pay no heed at all to anonymous scurrility—certainly not to attempt to reply to it with a cudgel. When Johnson heard that Foote meant to "take him off," he turned to Davies and asked him what was the common price of an oak stick; but an

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oak stick in Johnson's hands, and an oak stick in Goldsmith's hands, were two different things. However, to the bookseller's shop the indignant poet proceeded, in company with a friend; got hold of Evans; accused him of having insulted a young lady by putting her name in his paper; and, when the publisher would fain have shifted the responsibility on to the editor, forthwith denounced him as a rascal, and hit him over the back with his cane. The publisher, however, was quite a match for Goldsmith; and there is no saying how the deadly combat might have ended, had not a lamp been broken overhead, the oil of which drenched both the warriors. This intervention of the superior gods was just as successful as a Homeric cloud; the fray ceased; Goldsmith and his friend withdrew; and ultimately an action for assault was compromised by Goldsmith's paying fifty pounds to a charity. Then the howl of the journals arose. Their prerogative had been assailed. "Attacks upon private character were the most liberal existing source of newspaper income," Mr. Forster writes; and so the pack turned with one cry on the unlucky poet. There was nothing of "the Monument" about poor Goldsmith; and at last he was worried into writing a letter of defence addressed to the public. "He has indeed done it very well," said Johnson to Boswell, "but it is a foolish thing well done." And further he remarked, "Why, sir, I believe it is the first time he has *beat*; he may have *been beaten* before. This, sir, is a new plume to him."

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## CHAPTER XVII.

### INCREASING DIFFICULTIES.—THE END.

THE pecuniary success of *She Stoops to Conquer* did but little to relieve Goldsmith from those financial embarrassments which were now weighing heavily on his mind. And now he had less

of the old high spirits that had enabled him to laugh off the cares of debt. His health became disordered ; an old disease renewed its attacks, and was grown more violent because of his long-continued sedentary habits. Indeed, from this point to the day of his death—not a long interval, <sup>for</sup> ~~either~~—we find little but a record of successive endeavours, some of them wild and hopeless enough, to obtain money anyhow. Of course he went to the Club, as usual ; and gave dinner parties ; and had a laugh or a song ready for the occasion. It is possible, also, to trace a certain growth of confidence in himself, no doubt the result of the repeated proofs of his genius he had put before his friends. It was something more than mere personal intimacy that justified the rebuke he administered to Reynolds, when the latter painted an allegorical picture representing the triumph of Beattie and Truth over Voltaire and Scepticism. “ It very ill becomes a man of your eminence and character,” he said, “ to debase so high a genius as Voltaire before so mean a writer as Beattie. Beattie and his book will be forgotten in ten years, while Voltaire’s fame will last forever. Take care it does not perpetuate this picture, to the shame of such a man as you.” He was aware, too, of the position he had won for himself in English literature. He knew that people in after-days would ask about him ; and it was with no sort of unwarrantable vainglory that he gave Percy certain materials for a biography which he wished him to undertake. Hence the *Percy Memoir*.

He was only forty-five when he made this request ; and he had not suffered much from illness during his life ; so that there was apparently no grounds for imagining that the end was near. But at this time Goldsmith began to suffer severe fits of depression ; and he grew irritable and capricious of temper—no doubt another result of failing health. He was embroiled in disputes with the Booksellers ; and, on one occasion, seems to have been much hurt because Johnson, who had been asked to step in as arbiter, decided against him. He was offended with Johnson

on another occasion because of his sending away certain dishes at a dinner given to him by Goldsmith, as a hint that these entertainments were too luxurious for one in Goldsmith's position. It was probably owing to some temporary feeling of this sort—perhaps to some expression of it on Goldsmith's part—that Johnson spoke of Goldsmith's "malice" towards him. Mrs. Thrale had suggested that Goldsmith would be the best person to write Johnson's biography. "The dog would write it best, to be sure," said Johnson, "but his particular malice towards me, and general disregard of truth, would make the book useless to all and injurious to my character." Of course it is always impossible to say what measure of jocular exaggeration there may not be in a chance phrase such as this ; of the fact that there was no serious or permanent quarrel between the two friends we have abundant proof in Boswell's faithful pages.

To return to the various endeavours made by Goldsmith and his friends to meet the difficulties now closing in around him, we find, first of all, the familiar hack-work. For two volumes of a *History of Greece* he had received from Griffin £250. Then his friends tried to get him a pension from the Government ; but this was definitely refused. An expedient of his own seemed to promise well at first. He thought of bringing out a *Popular Dictionary of Arts and Sciences*, a series of contributions mostly by his friends, with himself as editor ; and among those who offered to assist him were Johnson, Reynolds, Burke, and Dr. Burney. But the booksellers were afraid. The project would involve a large expense : and they had no high opinion of Goldsmith's business habits. Then he offered to alter *The Good-natured Man* for Garrick ; but Garrick preferred to treat with him for a new comedy, and generously allowed him to draw on him for the money in advance. This last help enabled him to go to Barton for a brief holiday ; but the relief was only temporary. On his return to London even his nearest friends began to observe the change in his manner. In the old



days Goldsmith had faced pecuniary difficulties with a light heart; but now, his health broken, and every avenue of escape apparently closed, he was giving way to despair. His friend Cradock, coming up to town, found Goldsmith in a most despondent condition: and also hints that the unhappy author was trying to conceal the true state of affairs. "I believe," says Cradock, "he died miserable, and that his friends were not entirely aware of his distress."

And yet it was during this closing period of anxiety, despondency, and gloomy foreboding, that the brilliant and humorous lines of *Retaliation* were written—that last scintillation of the bright and happy genius that was soon to be extinguished forever. The most varied accounts have been given of the origin of this *jeu d'esprit*; and even Garrick's, which was meant to supersede and correct all others, is self-contradictory. For according to this version of the story, which was found among the Garrick papers, and which is printed in Mr. Cunningham's edition of Goldsmith's works, the whole thing arose out of Goldsmith and Garrick resolving one evening at the St. James's Coffee House to write each other's epitaph. Garrick's well-known couplet was instantly produced:

"Here lies Nolly Goldsmith, for shortness called Noll,  
Who wrote like an angel, but talked like poor Poll."

Goldsmith, according to Garrick, either would not or could not retort at the moment; "but went to work, and some weeks after produced the following printed poem, called *Retaliation*." But Garrick himself goes on to say, "The following poems in manuscript were written by several of the gentlemen on purpose to provoke the Doctor to an answer, which came forth at last with great credit to him in *Retaliation*." The most probable version of the story, which may be pieced together from various sources, is that at the coffee-house named this business of writing comic epitaphs was started some evening or other by the whole

company; that Goldsmith and Garrick pitted themselves against each other; that thereafter Goldsmith began as occasion served to write similar squibs about his friends, which were shown about as they were written; that thereupon those gentlemen, not to be behindhand, composed more elaborate pieces in proof of their wit; and that, finally, Goldsmith resolved to bind these fugitive lines of his together in a poem, which he left unfinished, and which, under the name of *Retaliation*, was published after his death. This hypothetical account receives some confirmation from the fact that the scheme of the poem and its component parts do not fit together well; the introduction looks like an after-thought; and has not the freedom and pungency of a piece of improvisation. An imaginary dinner is described, the guests being Garrick, Reynolds, Burke, Cumberland, and the rest of them, Goldsmith last of all. More wine is called for, until the whole of his companions have fallen beneath the table:

“Then, with chaos and blunders encircling my head,  
Let me ponder, and tell what I think of the *dead*.”

This is a somewhat clumsy excuse for introducing a series of epitaphs; but the epitaphs amply atone for it. That on Garrick is especially remarkable as a bit of character-sketching; its shrewd hints—all in perfect courtesy and good humour—going a little nearer to the truth than is common in epitaphs of any sort:—

“Here lies David Garrick, describe me who can;  
An abridgment of all that was pleasant in man.  
As an actor, confessed without rival to shine;  
As a wit, if not first, in the very first line;  
Yet, with talents like these, and an excellent heart,  
The man had his failings, a dupe to his art.  
Like an ill-judging beauty, his colours he spread,  
And beplastered with rouge his own natural red.  
On the stage he was natural, simple, affecting;  
’Twas only that, when he was off, he was acting.

With no reason on earth to go out of his way,  
 He turned and he varied full ten times a day :  
 Though secure of our hearts, yet confoundedly sick  
 If they were not his own by finessing and trick ;  
 He cast off his friends, as a huntsman his pack,  
 For he knew when he pleased he could whistle them back.  
 Of praise a mere glutton, he swallowed what came ;  
 And the puff of a dunce, he mistook it for fame ;  
 Till his relish grown callous, almost to disease,  
 Who peppered the highest was surest to please.  
 But let us be candid, and speak out our mind :  
 If dunces applauded, he paid them in kind.  
 Ye Kenricks, ye Kellys, and Woodfalls so grave,  
 What a commerce was yours, while you got and you gave !  
 How did Grub Street re-echo the shouts that you raised,  
 While he was be-Rosciused, and you were bepraised.  
 But peace to his spirit, wherever it flies,  
 To act as an angel and mix with the skies :  
 Those poets who owe their best fame to his skill  
 Shall still be his flatterers, go where he will ;  
 Old Shakespeare receive him with praise and with love,  
 And Beaumonts and Bens be his Kellys above."

The truth is that Goldsmith, though he was ready to bless his "honest little man" when he received from him sixty pounds in advance for a comedy not begun, never took quite so kindly to Garrick as to some of his other friends. There is no pretence of discrimination at all, for example, in the lines devoted in this poem to Reynolds. All the generous enthusiasm of Goldsmith's Irish nature appears here; he will admit of no possible rivals to this especial friend of his:—

"Here Reynolds is laid, and to tell you my mind,  
 He has not left a wiser or better behind."

There is a tradition that the epitaph on Reynolds, ending with the unfinished line

"By flattery unspoiled . . . ."

was Goldsmith's last piece of writing. One would like to believe that, in any case.

Goldsmith had returned to his Edgware lodgings, and had, indeed, formed some notion of selling his chambers in the Temple, and living in the country for at least ten months in the year, when a sudden attack of his old disorder drove him into town again for medical advice. He would appear to have received some relief; but a nervous fever followed; and on the night of the 25th March, 1774, when he was but forty six years of age, he took to his bed for the last time. At first he refused to regard his illness as serious; and insisted on dosing himself with certain fever-powders from which he had received benefit on previous occasions; but by and by as his strength gave way, he submitted to the advice of the physicians who were in attendance on him. Day after day passed; his weakness visibly increasing, though, curiously enough, the symptoms of fever were gradually abating. At length one of the doctors, remarking to him that his pulse was in greater disorder than it should be from the degree of fever, asked him if his mind was at ease. "No, it is not," answered Goldsmith; and these were his last words. Early in the morning of Monday, April 4, convulsions set in; these continued for rather more than an hour; then the troubled brain and the sick heart found rest for ever.

When the news was carried to his friends, Burke, it is said, burst into tears, and Reynolds put aside his work for the day. But it does not appear that they had visited him during his illness; and neither Johnson, nor Reynolds, nor Burke, nor Garrick followed his body to the grave. It is true, a public funeral was talked of; and among others, Reynolds, Burke, and Garrick were to have carried the pall; but this was abandoned; and Goldsmith was privately buried in the ground of the Temple Church on the 9th of April, 1774. Strangely enough, too, Johnson seems to have omitted all mention of Goldsmith

from his letters to Boswell. It was not until Boswell had written to him, on June 24th, "You have said nothing to me about poor Goldsmith." that Johnson, writing on July 4, answered as follows:—"Of poor dear Dr. Goldsmith there is little to be told, more than the papers have made public. He died of a fever, made, I am afraid, more violent by uneasiness of mind. His debts began to be heavy, and all his resources were exhausted. Sir Joshua is of opinion that he owed not less than two thousand pounds. Was ever poet so trusted before."

But if the greatest grief at the sudden and premature death of Goldsmith would seem to have been shown at the moment by certain wretched creatures who were found weeping on the stairs leading to his chambers, it must not be supposed that his fine friends either forgot him, or ceased to regard his memory with a great gentleness and kindness. Some two years after, when a monument was about to be erected to Goldsmith in Westminster Abbey, Johnson consented to write "the poor dear Doctor's epitaph;" and so anxious were the members of that famous circle in which Goldsmith had figured, that a just tribute should be paid to his genius, that they even ventured to send a round-robin to the great Cham desiring him to amend his first draft. Now, perhaps, we have less interest in Johnson's estimate of Goldsmith's genius—though it contains the famous *Nullum quod tetigit non ornavit*—than in the phrases which tell of the honour paid to the memory of the dead poet by the love of his companions and the faithfulness of his friends. It may here be added that the precise spot where Goldsmith was buried in the Temple churchyard is unknown. So lived and so died Oliver Goldsmith.

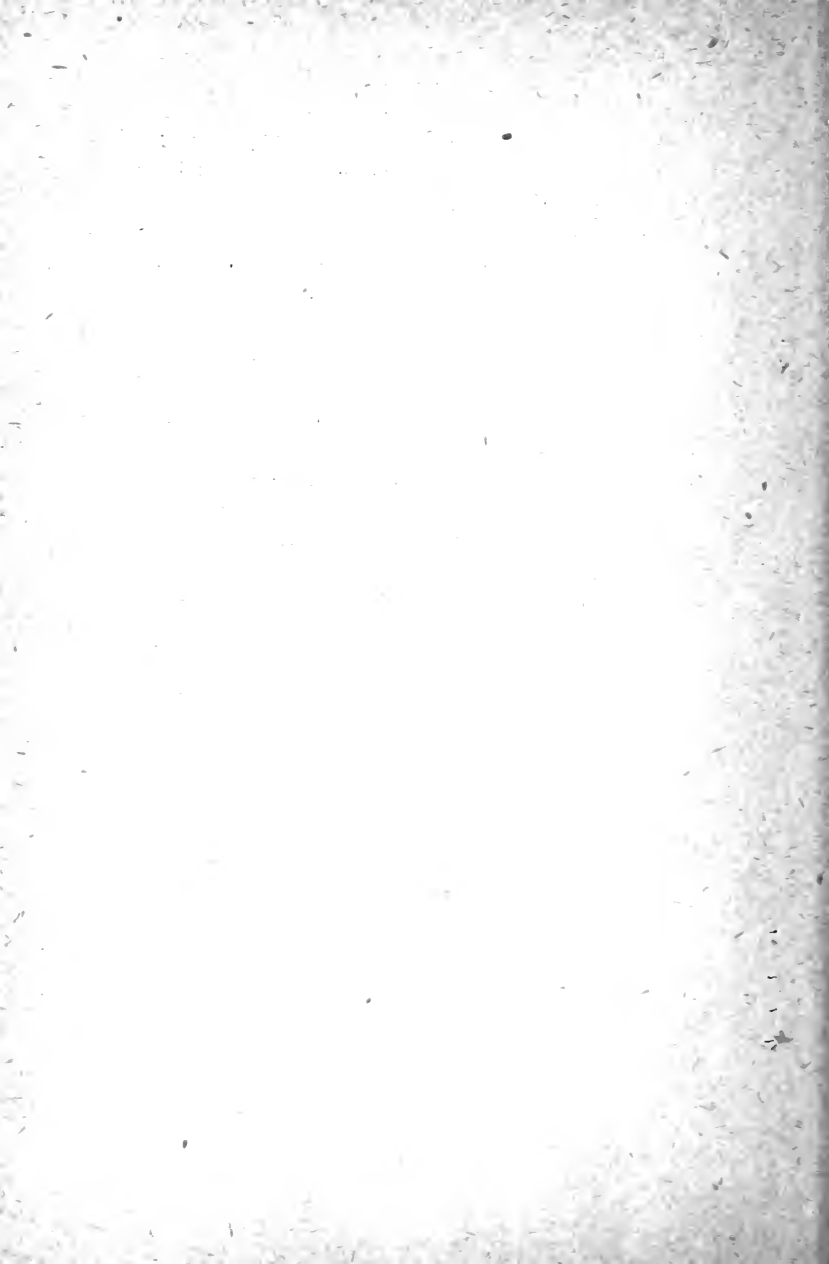
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In the foregoing pages the writings of Goldsmith have been given so prominent a place in the history of his life that it is unnecessary to take them here collectively and endeavour to sum up their distinctive qualities. As much as could be said within the limited space has, it is hoped, been said about their genuine and tender pathos, that never at any time verges on the affected or theatrical; about their quaint delicate, delightful humour; about that broader humour that is not afraid to provoke the wholesome laughter of mankind by dealing with common and familiar ways, and manners, and men; about that choiceness of diction, that lightness and grace of touch, that lend a charm even to Goldsmith's ordinary hack-work.

Still less necessary, perhaps, is it to review the facts and circumstances of Goldsmith's life; and to make of them an example, a warning, or an accusation. That has too often been done. His name has been used to glorify a sham Bohemianism—a Bohemianism that finds it easy to live in taverns, but does not find it easy, so far as one sees, to write poems like the *Deserted Village*. His experiences as an author have been brought forward to swell the cry about neglected genius—that is, by writers who assume their genius in order to prove the neglect. The misery that occasionally befell him during his wayward career has been made the basis of an accusation against society, the English constitution, Christianity—Heaven knows what. It is time to have done with all this nonsense. Goldsmith resorted to the hack-work of literature when everything else had failed him; and he was fairly paid for it. When he did better work, when he “struck for honest fame,” the nation gave him all the honour that he could have desired. With an assured reputation, and with ample means of subsistence, he obtained entrance into the most distinguished society then in England—he was made the friend of England's greatest in the arts and literature—and could have confined himself to that society exclusively if he had chosen. His temperament,

no doubt, exposed him to suffering ; and the exquisite sensitiveness of a man of genius may demand our sympathy ; but in far greater measure is our sympathy demanded for the thousands upon thousands of people who, from illness or nervous excitability, suffer from quite as keen a sensitiveness without the consolation of the fame that genius brings.

In plain truth, Goldsmith himself would have been the last to put forward pleas humiliating alike to himself and to his calling. Instead of beseeching the State to look after authors ; instead of imploring society to grant them "recognition ;" instead of saying of himself "he wrote, and paid the penalty ;" he would frankly have admitted that he chose to live his life his own way, and therefore paid the penalty. This is not written with any desire of upbraiding Goldsmith. He did choose to live his own life his own way, and we now have the splendid and beautiful results of his work ; and the world—looking at these with a constant admiration, and with a great and lenient love for their author—is not anxious to know what he did with his guineas, or whether the milkman was ever paid. "He had raised money and squandered it, by every artifice of acquisition and folly of expense. BUT LET NOT HIS FRAILTIES BE REMEMBERED : HE WAS A VERY GREAT MAN." This is Johnson's wise summing up : and with it we may here take leave of gentle Goldsmith.





## NOTES.



# NOTES TO THE LIFE OF GOLDSMITH.

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## CHAPTER I.

5, 13. "You come hot," etc. Quoted from a series of lectures on the English Humourists of the Eighteenth Century, delivered in England (1851), Scotland, and the United States, and more particularly from the sixth lecture, *Sterne and Goldsmith*.

6, 11. **Mr. Forster.** John Forster (1812-1876), journalist, critic, author, friend of Dickens and Browning, a man of unflinching purpose combined with keenest sympathy. His "Statesmen of the Commonwealth" (1840) was followed by the "Life and Times of Oliver Goldsmith" (1854), and by lives of De Foe and Charles Churchill, as well as of Charles Dickens (1871-4). The student should not allow Black's disparagement of Forster's *Goldsmith* to prejudice him against a biography which Irving, himself also a biographer of the genial author, pronounced to be "executed with a spirit, a feeling, a grace and an elegance that leave nothing to be desired."

6, 16. **Companions of the Bath.** The order of the Bath, one of the most ancient orders of British knighthood, has three degrees rising in merit from Knights Companions (K.B.), Knights Commanders (K.C.B.), to Knights Grand Cross (G.C.B.).

6, 22. **sizar** (*sī'zer*). College term in Trinity College, Dublin, and in Cambridge; from "size," a farthing's worth of food or drink. A student whose college expenses are partly remitted because of his poverty. "The first thing exacted of a sizar in these days was to give proof of classical attainments. He was to show himself, to a certain reasonable extent, a good scholar; in return for which, being clad in a black gown of coarse stuff without sleeves, he was marked with the servant's badge of a red cap, and put to the servant's offices of sweeping courts in the morning, carrying up dishes from the kitchen to the fellows' dining-table in the afternoon, and waiting in the hall till the fellows had dined." (Forster, *Goldsmith*, chap. ii.) The menial services are now abolished.

Black's quotations are from various parts of Forster's biography.

7, 26. **New Zealander.** “And she (*i. e.*, the Roman Catholic Church) may still exist in undiminished vigour when some traveller from New Zealand shall, in the midst of a vast solitude, take his stand on a broken arch of London Bridge to sketch the ruins of St. Paul’s.”—Macaulay, *Ranke’s History of the Popes*, in the *Edinburgh Review* for Oct. 1840.

8, 9. **The Good-natured Man.** See chap. xii. and xiii.

8, 10. **Brick Court.** See note 61, 5.

8, 26. **résumé** (*rā zū mū’*). Fr. = summing-up.

8, 33. **calculation.** See Macaulay’s *Goldsmith* in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 1856. “His average income, during the last seven years of his life, certainly exceeded 400*l* a year; and 400*l* a year ranked, among the incomes of that day, at least as high as 800*l* a year would rank at present. A single man living in the Temple with 400*l* a year might even be called opulent.” Cf. p. 25.

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## CHAPTER II.

9, 9. **Pallas.** Near Ballymahon in the extreme s. of Longford. **Lissoy** is a few miles further south, near Kilkenny West in West Meath.

9, 10. **the Rev. Charles Goldsmith.** It is well known that Goldsmith described his father in the *Deserted Village*, cf. note 103, 17; one of the lines, “And passing rich with forty pounds a year” (l. 142), Black here skilfully introduces. [“Passing” = surpassing, exceedingly.] Cf. below (10, 4), where the same device is employed to introduce “A man he was to all the country dear” (l. 141). This device will be noticed as an interesting feature of Black’s style throughout the essay.

10, 6. **Paddy Byrne.** “Paddy Byrne, the hedge-schoolmaster, took him in hand.”—Thackeray. This was Thomas Byrne, retired army quarter-master.

10, 7. **“nicely sanded floor.”** From the description of the inn, *Deserted Village* (l. 227) :—

“The white-washed wall, the nicely sanded floor.”

10, 11. **Fleet Street.** See chap. v. p. 28, and note 28, 29.

10, 12. "primrose peeps." L. 340 of *Deserted Village*. See pp. 105-6.

10, 20. **Signora Colomba.** The letter was written Dec. 27, 1757. Mrs. Burney tells us "Columba Mattei was both a charming singer and a spirited and intelligent actress, and a great favorite as a prima donna." She retired from the stage in 1762. (Burney, *History of Music*, iv., 464 *et seq.*)

10, 21. **Mr. Hodson.** "The son of a gentleman of good property, residing at St. John's near Athlone." He married Goldsmith's elder sister Catherine. See 13, 21 ff.

10, 22. **Johnny Armstrong's Good Night.** This is the ballad of Johnny Armstrong, of Gilnockie, head of a gallant body of border free-booters, who ventured with fatal results to put himself in the power of James V. The full title of the ballad is *Johnny Armstrong's Last Good-night, showing how John Armstrong, with eight-score men, fought a bloody battle with the Scotch King at Edinborough.* See Child's *English and Scotch Ballads* vi., 39. The following stanza shows the merit of the famous piece :—

"Said John, 'Fight on, my merry men all,  
I am a little wounded, but am not slain;  
I will lay me down to bleed a while,  
Then I'll rise and fight with you again."

**Peggy Golden** was "our old dairy maid" who "sung me to tears," says Goldsmith in the *Bee*, III. Oct. 13, 1759.

11, 7. **fives.** A game resembling tennis but played against a wall. It takes its name from the mode of counting points, three *pices* or fifteen.

11, 23. **Dr. Strean.** Successor to Henry Goldsmith, elder brother of Oliver, in the curacy of Kilkenny West.

12, 6. **Æsop.** The fabulist, born a slave in Samos about 620 B.C. His writings were held in high esteem in the most brilliant age of Athenian literature. During the Middle Ages the unfounded notion was entertained that he was monstrously ugly and deformed, and he was so represented in the life prefixed to a copy of the fables attributed to him by the monk Planudes (14th century). Shakespeare has perpetuated that notion in iii. *Henry VI.* v. 5, where Prince Edward, alluding to the hump-backed Richard of Gloster, cries :

"Let Æsop fable in a winter's night."

It was the notion of deformity that gave the sting to the fiddler's taunt.

12, 8. Our herald, etc. Forster gives this line :—

“Heralds, proclaim aloud! all saying,” etc.

12, 27. the story of the mistake. Black does not “know” the story any too well. Goldsmith was *not* free from school-life, and *not* returning home, when the incident occurred. At the close of his last holidays, Oliver, then almost sixteen years old, was returning for his last session in the school of the Rev. Patrick Hughes. Loitering on the way he found himself at nightfall a few miles out of the way, in the street of Ardagh. There the waggish fencing-master, Cornelius Kelly, directed him to Squire Featherston’s, as having the “best house,” punning of course on the double sense of house as inn and mansion. (Forster’s *Life*.) For *She Stoops to Conquer*, see chap. xvi., p. 115 f.

13, 26. pensioner. One who paid for his college living out of his own income. Contrast “sizar,” note 6, 22.

13, 28. uncle Contarine. The Rev. Thomas Contarine of Kilmore near Carrick-on-Shannon, and afterwards of Oran, near Roscommon.

13, 32. college career (1745). Black follows Prior and Forster in dating Goldsmith’s entrance into Trinity College in 1745. But Dr. J. F. Waller has shown that the true date is the 11th of June, 1744. See Dobson’s *Goldsmith*, p. 20.

14, 11. street-ballads. “He would write street-ballads . . . ; sell them at the Rein-deer repository in Mountrath-court for five shillings a-piece ; and steal out of the college at night to hear them sung.” (Forster.)

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### CHAPTER III.

15, 10. Tony Lumpkin. In *She Stoops to Conquer*. At the inn of the *Three Pigeons*, Tony and his admirers met, drank, smoked, danced, and sang.

15, 14. his brother’s school. Goldsmith’s brother Henry had succeeded to his father’s parsonage-house at Pallas, served as curate in Kilkenny West, and was master of the village school, which after a period of wandering, was fixed in Lissoy. His mother, meanwhile, had removed to a cottage in Ballymahon, near which was George Conway’s old inn.

15, 19. "But Scripture," etc. Cf. Dan. viii., 19; I. Peter, iv., 7, etc.

15, 20. **buckeen.** An Anglo-Irish word, first used towards the end of last century,—“buck” meaning gay, dashing fellow, + the Irish diminutive “een.” The word is defined as a young man belonging to the second-rate gentry of Ireland, or the younger son of poorer aristocracy, having no profession, and aping the manners of the wealthier class. (*New Eng. Dict.*) Black takes the word from Thackeray, who says that Goldsmith “after college . . . lived for some years the life of a buckeen.”

15, 24. **the Church,** i. e., the Church of England, then the established Church in Ireland.

15, 27. **Elphin.** In the neighbouring county of Roscommon.

16, 26. **Mr. Barry Lyndon.** The hero of Thackeray's novel *Barry Lyndon*. That young gentleman, after having victoriously encountered Captain Quin in a duel, fled to Dublin on horseback. On the way he fell in with the fascinating Mrs. Fitzsimmons who, aided by the Captain her husband, rapidly made away with Barry's twenty guineas.

17, 7. **Edinburgh.** Famous then as now for its medical school.

17, 11. **Albinus.** Bernard Sigefroi Albinus (or Weiss) was one of the greatest of German anatomists. He taught in Leyden, dying in 1770.

17, 15. **Gaubius.** Jerome David Gaubius or Gaub (1705-1780), a German physician who taught chemistry and afterwards medicine in Leyden, winning a great reputation as a professor and author.

18, 13. “disputed.” “I had acquired another talent,” says the philosophic vagabond in the *Vicar of Wakefield*, “and this was a skill in disputation. In all the foreign universities and convents there are, upon certain days, philosophic theses maintained against adventitious disputants: for which, if the champion opposes with any dexterity, he can claim a gratuity in money, a dinner, and a bed for one night. In this manner, then, I fought my way towards England.”

18, 20. **Baron von Holberg** (1684-1754). In the sixth chapter of his *Inquiry into the Present State of Polite Learning*, Goldsmith narrates the life of this extraordinary man. The son of a Norwegian sentinel, he learned to read without a master, travelled from school to school begging instruction and bread, taught French in Copenhagen; made the tour of Europe on foot, earning his way by his voice and some little

skill in music ; taught in Oxford, where he wrote a history ; returned to Copenhagen to win fame and riches and nobility for the extent of his learning and the merit of his dramas and other literary productions.

18, 21. **Orpheus.** The mythological minstrel of Thrace whose lyre could charm all things in earth and the shades.

19, 4. **ignorance on this point.** "He relates," says Macaulay, "with perfect faith and with perfect gravity, all the most absurd lies which he could find in books of travels about gigantic Patagonians, monkeys that preach sermons, nightingales that repeat long conversations. 'If he can tell a horse from a cow,' said Dr. Johnson, 'that is the extent of his knowledge of zoology.'"

20, 2. **lines of Addison's.** In No. 412 of the *Spectator*. The lines are nineteen Latin hexameters of Addison's composition. But Goldsmith translates them into English verse ; see *Animated Nature*, Bk. v. chap. i. Joseph Addison (1672-1719) was secretary of state and the greatest of the essayists of the Queen Anne period. See note 33, 30.

20, 17. **Louvain.** In Belgium, N. E. of Brussels, possessing the largest university in the country.

20, 19. **Johnson.** Samuel Johnson (1709-1784), the literary dictator of his age, author of the first great English dictionary and of many miscellaneous works in prose and verse. **Edmund Burke** (1729-1797), a lawyer, who won fame as a writer by his *Essay on the Sublime and Beautiful*, and his *Reflections on the French Revolution* and added to his fame as a writer a greater fame as an orator. **Sir Joshua Reynolds** (1723-1792), a great portrait painter, founder of the English school.

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#### CHAPTER IV.

21, 20. **excursus** (*ex cur' sūs*). Digression.

21, 20. **Necessity and Free-will.** Necessity, the doctrine that the will is not free to choose, but that all actions are the inevitable result of antecedent forces ; Free-will, the doctrine that, amidst all forces, that tend to influence action, the will is free to choose without restraint.

21, 26. **indictment** (*in dīt' ment*). Formal accusation.

22, 7. **Charles Surfaces.** In Sheridan's famous comedy *The School for Scandal*, Charles Surface represents the scapegrace reformed,



who is evil only on the surface ; while his elder brother **Joseph Surface** is on the surface a youthful marvel of prudence, good sense, and benevolence, while in reality he is a scheming, plausible, malicious rogue.

**22, 21. Samuel Boyse** (1708-1749). Translator and poet. His *Deity: a Poem*, which appeared in 1743-9, was followed by *The Praise of Peace*, 1742. He led a miserable life, though worthy in many respects of a better fate. Cibber in his *Lives of the Poets* relates that "about the year 1740 Mr. Boyse, reduced to the last extremity of human wretchedness, had not a shirt, a coat, or any kind of apparel to put on ; the sheets in which he lay were carried to the pawnbrokers, and he was obliged to be confined to bed with no other covering than a blanket. During this time he had some employment in writing verses for the magazines.... He sat up in bed with a blanket wrapped about him, through which he had cut a hole large enough to admit his arm, and placing the paper upon his knee scribbled, in the best manner he could, the verses he was obliged to make."

**23, 5. corrector of the press.** Proof-reader.

**23, 6. Samuel Richardson** (1689-1760). A prosperous printer and the first great English novelist, author of *Pamela*, *Clarissa Harlowe*, *Sir Charles Grandison*, etc.

**23, 11. Peckham.** A village in Surrey, near London.

**23, 15. the Bee.** The issue No. vi., for Nov. 10, 1759. **George Primrose's** advice in chap. xx. of the *Vicar of Wakefield*, whence the subsequent quotation is drawn.

**23, 25. hack-writer.** A "hack" is a horse "hackneyed" or let for hire ; hence applied to a literary man it denotes one who can be hired to do the meanest sorts of literary work,—annotations, etc.

**24, 17. Paternoster Row.** A narrow street, north of St. Paul's Churchyard. Here Griffiths published his *Monthly Review* ; to "Mr. Printer Woodfall in Paternoster Row," the *Letters of Junius* were addressed ; here the booksellers Awnshaw, John Churchill, and Thomas Longman (founder of the present house of Longmans) held their shops ; here by "R. Baldwin at the Rose in Paternoster Row," Smollett's *Critical Review* was first published. (Wheatley's *London*.)

**25, 25. philosophic vagabond.** See chap. xx. of the *Vicar of Wakefield*.

25, 26. **cognoscento** (*kon yo shen' to*). The only form recognized by standard Eng. is *cognoscente*, which is the correct Italian form. A connoisseur, a man versed especially in the fine arts.

25, 30. **Pietro Perugino** (*pē ā' tro per oo gē'no.*) (1466-1524) One of the greatest painters of the early Italian school, master of Raphael.

26, 3. **criticism**. See *Polite Learning* and *Citizen of the World*, Letter lvi.

26, 20. **Home's Douglas**. John Home (1722-1808), a Scottish clergyman, author of various dramas, the most popular of which, the tragedy of *Douglas*, was received with unbounded, though undeserved, enthusiasm.

26, 34. **Smollett**. Tobias Smollett (1721-1771) a Scotch ship-surgeon who won extraordinary success as a writer of novels—*Roderick Random*, *Peregrine Pickle*, *Humphry Clinker*, etc. He was for a time editor of the *Critical Review* (see pp. 32-3). Among the most remarkable of his works is his *History of England*. His few poems (63, 19)—the satires of *Advice* and *Reproof*, an *Ode on Independence* and a tragedy *The Regicide*, etc., are vigorous but of no great poetic merit.

27, 2. **Jonas Hanway** (1712-1786). English traveller and philanthropist. He wrote an account of his travels abroad :—" *An Historical Account of the British Trade over the Caspian Sea ; with a Journal of Travels from London through Russia into Persia, and back again through Russia, Germany, and Holland,*" etc., (1754); and of his travels at home *A Journal of Eight Days' Journey from Portsmouth to Kingston-upon-Thames* (1756) ; with an endless number of other works—tracts, disquisitions, considerations, etc.

27, 8. **Basque**. Language of the people inhabiting the slopes of the Pyrenees near the Bay of Biscay. The origin of the language, which is non-Aryan, is a mystery. **Armorican**, the language of the Armorican peninsula or Brittany. It is allied to Cornish, hence to Celtic, an Aryan tongue.

27, 22. **Fleet Street**. One of the most famous of London business streets, between Ludgate and the Strand.

27, 23. **coffee-house**. A shop where coffee was drunk, but which was rather a resort for the idle, and a rendezvous for men of politics or business.

**27, 34. Coromandel coast.** A portion of the west shore of the Bay of Bengal.

**28, 30. Green-Arbour Court.** Now swept away. "Goldsmith lived, from 1758-1760, in what was then No. 12, on the right hand corner as the traveller ascended the steps ["a dizzy ladder of flagstones called Breakneck steps," Macaulay] from Fleet Market. "A wretched dirty room," he had, according to Bishop Percy, "in which there was but one chair, and when he from civility offered it to his visitant, himself was obliged to sit in the window."

**29, 6. Surgeons' Hall.** Surgeons' Hall, the home of the Royal College of Surgeons, was from 1751-1809 situated in Old Bailey, London. In the books of the Court of Examiners of the Society for 21st Dec. 1758, stands the record: "James Bernard, mate to an hospital, Oliver Goldsmith found not qualified for ditto."

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## CHAPTER V.

**29, 25. Grub Street, now Milton Street.** The occupation of this street by "writers of small histories, dictionaries, and temporary poems" gave rise to the term being synonymous with mean authors and mean literary productions. Marvel, Pope, and Swift gave the name its unenviable notoriety.

**30, 20. virtuosi** (*věrt oo ō' ssē*). Ital., pl. of *virtuoso*, virtuoso, a person skilled in fine arts. "Professed critics of beauty in works of art, judge of medals by the smell, and pictures by feeling. In statuary hang over a fragment with the most ardent gaze of admiration, though wanting the head and other extremities; if dug from a ruin the *Torse* becomes inestimable." *Polite Learning*, chap. iv.

**30, 20. filosofi** (*fē lō' ssō fē*). Ital., pl. of *filosofo*, philosopher. "These boast of having theirs [knowledge] from books and study. Bred up all their lives in colleges, they have there learned to think in track, servilely to follow the leader of their sect, and only to adopt such opinions as their universities, or the inquisition, are pleased to allow." *Polite Learning*, chap. iv.

**30, 24. fawn.** Now spelled 'faun,' a rural demi-deity of human form, but having a goat's tail, horns, and pointed ears. **Dryad**, a deity or nymph of the woods. **Hamadryad**, a dryad that lived and died with the tree with which it was associated.

**30, 26. Guarini** (1537-1612). An Italian poet, author of *Il Pastor Fido* (The faithful Shepherd), which was long regarded, for its sweet sentiment and elegant style, as the standard of pastoral poetry.

**30, 31. modern Arcadians.** The Italians under the influence of the pastoral spirit, as seen in *Il Pastor Fido*, were attempting artificially to revive the shepherd life of the Greeks, among whom the district of Arcadia in the Peloponnesus was famed for the simple pleasures of its peaceful rural life.

**30, 32. abbé** (*a* [*as* in *far*] *bā'*). Fr., lit. 'abbot,' also a title for Catholic ecclesiastics in general.

**30, 34. divertimenti** (*dē vĕrtē mĕnt'ē*). Ital., pl. of *divertimento*, diversion, amusement.

**32, 22. indent.** Apprentice themselves to the business.

**33, 5. Kenrick.** "He was originally a mechanic, but, possessing some degree of talent and industry, applied himself to literature as a profession....He wrote plays and satires, philosophic tracts, critical dissertations, and works on philosophy; nothing from his pen ever rose to first-rate excellence, though he had received from some university the degree of Doctor of Laws. Dr. Johnson characterized his literary career in one short sentence. 'Sir, he is one of the many who have made themselves *public*, without making themselves *known*.'" Irving, *Goldsmith*.

**33, 27. St. Paul's Churchyard.** An irregular area around St. Paul's Cathedral and burial-ground, London. It was famous for its booksellers even in Shakespeare's day.

**33, 30. Spectator.** The daily paper published by Steele and Addison during the years 1711, 1712, 1714. It was immensely popular in its day because of the wit and elegance of its articles, which are still a living force as literature.

**34, 2. collaborateurs** (*co lab bō ra ters'*). Fr., associates in literary or scientific work.

**35, 4. chandlers' shops.** Especially for the sale of candles. (Fr. *chandelle*).

**35, 6. causerie** (*cō z'rē'*). Fr., conversation, talk.

**35, 33. Islington.** A parish lying to the north of London, formerly a village and rural district, and a famous resort of holiday citizens.

**36, 1. Bow Bell.** The bells of Bow (St. Mary Le Bow) church, Cheapside, in the heart of London.

**36, 7. Minus juvat,** etc. 'Wide-spread renown is less pleasing than great renown.' This is a variation of Pliny, "I do not know how it is, but mankind are generally more pleased with an extensive reputation that even a great one." *Epist.* Bk. iv. 12.

**36, 15. like Raleigh.** Sir Walter Raleigh's History of the World "sold very slowlie at first, and the bookseller complayned of it, and told him that he should be a loser by it, which put Sir W. in a passion. He said, that since the world did not understand it, they should not have this second part, which he took before his face and threw into the fire, and burnt it.—*Aubrey MSS.* (Prior.)

**36, 34. present tense.** "The historical present is scarcely to be met with in Old English; but there are numerous instances of it from the thirteenth century down to our times."—Kellner, *English Syntax*, 229.

## CHAPTER VI.

**38, 17. Percy.** Thomas Percy (1728-1811), rose to be bishop of Dromore in Ireland. His fame is preserved in his collection of old English poetry called the *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* (1765).

**38, 24. the great Cham** (*kām*) or Khan. Lit., the ruling prince of Tartary. Smollett in a letter to Wilkes in 1759 called Johnson, because of his social pre-eminence in literary circles, the "great Cham of literature."

**39, 3. Wine-Office Court,** in Fleet Street. See p. 50.

**39, 5. Boswell.** James Boswell (1740-1745), son of Lord Auchinleck, a Scottish judge. Through his friendship with Davies the actor, who was keeping a bookshop in Russel Street, he was introduced, 16th May, 1763, to Johnson, and the acquaintance became deep friendship. Boswell's notes on the doctor's conversations date from the first interview, and furnish a life that is unequalled in biographical literature.

**39, 14. Mr. Levett.** "Another inmate of Johnson's house from an early period was Robert Levett, who had been waiter in a French coffee-house, picked up a knowledge of physic, and practised among the poor. Johnson had known him from about 1746. He was

grotesque, stiff, and silent, according to Boswell (i, 24) and always waited upon Johnson at breakfast. Johnson, however, never treated him as a dependent."—Leslie Stephen.

40, 2. **Horace Walpole** (1717-1797), third son of the statesman Sir Robert Walpole. Out of many books, his *Letters*, showing the life of his time, are the only works having any living force to-day.

40, 5. **poor Poll**. The source of this phrase is quoted on p. 125.

40, 24. **Mrs. Horneck**. See p. 110.

40, 33. **au sérieux** (*ô sâ rê eu'*). Fr., *prendre au sérieux*, to take seriously, in earnest.

41, 7. **Mr. Croker**. John Wilson Croker (1780-1857), an Irishman who became an English politician and essayist. He annotated Boswell's *Life of Johnson*, and thereby did an excellent service to the literary history of the time.

41, 11. **Hawkins**. (Sir) John Hawkins an attorney and musician, afterwards a magistrate, knight, and author of a five-volume history of music. His *Life of Johnston* (1787) is referred to by Black, 60, 18.

41, 13. **tumid**. Inflated, bombastic.

42, 19. **Philistines**. A term used by Germans to signify "respectable" people of narrow minds and no ideas. "Philistine must have originally meant, in the mind of those who invented the nickname, a strong, dogged, unenlightened opponent of the chosen people, of the children of the light." Matthew Arnold, *Heine*.

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## CHAPTER VII.

42, 26. **Beau Nash**. Richard Nash (1674-1761), an Oxford graduate who would have entered law but for the fascinations of society. He became in 1704 master of ceremonies at Bath, where he ruled with regal sway. He died in poverty.

43, 6. **Voltaire**. (Fr. almost *vol tār'*) (1694-1778). One of the most powerful minds of modern times; author of tragedies, histories, and philosophic works; dictator of intellectual Europe during the last twenty years of his life. While Voltaire was not an atheist, his writings were directed against the church as it was, and established opinions generally, and left him open to the unfair charge of atheism. (See 123, 15.)

**43, 6. Monthly Review.** For 1857, article entitled *Universal History*.

**43, 7. Montesquieu** (Fr. *mon tes kē eu'*) (1689-1755). Historian and critic, author of *L'Esprit des Lois* and of *Lettres Persanes* (Persian Letters). These latter, published in 1721, satirize the vices of government, religion, and society.

**43, 8. Du Freny.** Goldsmith had in mind Charles Dufresny (*dū frā nē'*) (1648-1724), who was author of many plays and literary works, among the last being his *Entretiens* or *Amusements sérieux et comiques*, a novel giving ideas to Montesquieu for his *Lettres Persanes*.

**43, 9. "Turkish Spy,"** or more fully, *The Spy of the Great Seigneur in the Courts of the Christian Princes*, purported to be a translation into Italian from the Arabic, but was really written by John Paul Marona of Genoa (1642—1693). It reviewed the European affairs from 1637 till the time of publication, 1684, and was very popular.

**44, 5. turtle.** The marine turtle (green turtle), especially in the form of turtle soup, is the highly esteemed dish of the epicure.

**44, 6. Tully.** Marcus Tullius Cicero (B.C. 106-43), the Roman orator and philosopher.

**44, 22. naïveté** (*na* (as in *far*)*ēv' tū'*). Artlessness.

**44, 23. Man in Black.** See *Citizen of the World*.

**46, 3. how often a pet fancy.** *Johnny Armstrong* for example is alluded to in the *Bee*, in the *Vicar*, and in the letter to Mr. Hodson (10, 20).

**46, 6. Professor Masson** (1822- ). Professor of English literature in University Coll., London, and later in the university of Edinburgh.

**47, 8. Griffiths' accusation.** When Goldsmith desired to present himself at Surgeons' Hall (1758), he agreed to furnish Griffiths with four articles for the *Monthly*, provided the publisher went his security for a new suit of clothes. Certain books which Goldsmith was to review for one article, together with the suit, were almost immediately put into pawn to meet the needs of the poor keeper of his wretched lodging in Green-Arbour Court. Griffiths demanded back both clothes and books; Goldsmith was unable to comply with the demand and the publisher then—judging from Goldsmith's letter of Jan., 1759—accused him of being a sharper and a villain.

49, 18. *tête-à-tête* (*tât a* [as in *rar*] *tât'*). Fr. Literally "head to head," hence, in private.

49, 29. *asafoetida* (*a sa fēt' id a*). Gum of an Eastern plant, used as a seasoning by the Romans, but chiefly as medicine by the moderns.

51, 2. *Ascot*. Six miles s. w. of Windsor, with a fine race track. The races which take place in June are usually attended by the royal family.

51, 20. *angry land-lady*, etc. See p. 60.

52, 4. *Tunbridge*. Tunbridge Wells, near Tunbridge, Kent, has been well known for its waters since 1606.

52, 4. *Bath*. In Somersetshire: the baths have been famous since the Roman conquest of Britain.

52, 18. *Marionette*. Fr. 'puppet.'

52, 31. *trollops*. Idle, untidy women.

53, 32. *white aprons*. "He had the strongest aversion to a white apron. . . . I have known him on a ball night strip even the Duchess of Queensbury, and throw her apron at one of the hinder benches among the ladies' women." *Nash*, iii. 284 (ed. Prior).

53, 36. *Hogs-Norton*. Village near Gloucester (?).

54, 34. *Hospital*. For the care of the sick poor, founded by Nash.

54, 36. *Wiltshire's rooms*. Wiltshire's ball-room in Bath.

56, 11. *Nullum fere*, etc. Quoted from the opening lines of Dr. Johnson's epitaph on Goldsmith on the monument in Westminster Abbey: 'There was scarcely any kind of writing that he did not touch. There was none that he touched that he did not adorn.'

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## CHAPTER VIII.

56, 17. *Newbery*. John Newbery (1713-1767), a farmer's son who became a bookseller in London in 1744, and won especial fame as the publisher of little books for children. His *Weekly Gazette* contained Johnson's *Idler*; his *Public Ledger*, Goldsmith's *Chinese Letters*. He is spoken of in the *Vicar* as "the philanthropic bookseller in St. Paul's Churchyard." To Francis Newbery (1743-1818), his nephew and successor, Johnson sold the *Vicar* (or a share of it). See p. 62.



**56, 21. Canonbury House**, in Islington. An old manor hall, the tower of which was early let out in apartments, furnishing a refuge at various times for various authors.

**57, 19. Hogarth**. William Hogarth (1697-1764), painter and engraver, celebrated for engravings satirizing the follies and vices of his time.

**57, 23. Beauclerk**. Topham Beauclerk (1739-1780) a man of taste, reading and fortune, and, in spite of dissipated habits, a warm friend of Dr. Johnson's.

**57, 23. Bennet Langton** (1737-1801), an Oxford man and Greek scholar, whose kindly nature made him popular in the literary circles of his time.

**57, 24. Dr. Nugent**. A Roman Catholic physician, father-in-law of Edmund Burke. He became Viscount Clare. See, note 112, 26.

**57, 31. Mitre Tavern**, Fleet Street, the scene of Johnson's raciest conversations.

**58, 5. Miss Williams**. "Some time after the loss of his wife he [Johnson] received into his home Miss Anna Williams, daughter of a Welsh physician, . . . Miss Williams had come to London, for an operation on her eyes, during Mrs. Johnson's life. She afterwards became totally blind, and had a permanent apartment in Johnson's house. . . . Miss Williams was well educated and intelligent. Johnson took pleasure in her conversation, took her advice, and always treated her with high respect, in spite of her growing 'peevishness' in later years. She seems to have had some small means."—(Leslie Stephen.)

**58, 5. Bolt Court**. On the north side of Fleet Street. Miss Williams lived there for some years before Dr. Johnson made his home in No. 8. At her house he would drink tea every night before going to his rooms in the temple, and she always waited for him, no matter how late.

**58, 14. Rev. Mr. Ogilvie**. "He [Dr. Johnson] had looked into the poems of a pretty voluminous writer, Mr. (now Dr.) John Ogilvie, which had lately come out, but could find no thinking in them. Boswell: 'Is there not imagination in them, sir?' Johnson: 'Why, sir, there is in them what *was* imagination, but it is no more imagination in *him*, than sound is sound in the echo. And his diction, too, is not

his own. We have long ago seen *white-robed innocence* and *flower-bespangled meads.*'"—Boswell's Johnson.

The memorable epigram arose through Mr. Ogilvie remarking that Scotland had a great many noble wild prospects, when Dr. Johnson replied: "I believe, sir, you have a great many; Norway, too, has noble wild prospects, and Lapland is remarkable for prodigious noble wild prospects. But, sir, let me tell you, the noblest prospect which a Scotchman ever sees, is the high road that leads him to England!"

59, 2. **subsequent visit.** Johnson, under the proud guidance of Boswell, visited the Highlands in 1773.

59, 4. **he garred, etc.** 'He made kings know they had a joint in their necks.'

59, 14. **Tom Davis.** See Davies, 58, 11.

59, 22. **Sir James Macdonald.** "A young man of distinguished merit, who united the highest reputation at Eton and Oxford, with the patriarchal spirit of a great Highland chieftain." Boswell.

59, 27. **Martin.** M. Martin of St. Kilda (an island in the Outer Hebrides), who published *A Lake Voyage to St. Kilda* in 1698 and *A Description of the Western Islands of Scotland* in 1703.

60, 18. **Mrs. Piozzi** (1739-1821). A woman of beauty and education. She married Henry Thrale, a prosperous brewer, and became the devoted friend of Samuel Johnson from 1764 to 1781. Her marriage in 1784 with the Italian Piozzi broke off all relations between the two. Two volumes from her pen, *Anecdotes of the late Samuel Johnson* (1786) and *Letters to and from Dr. Samuel Johnson* (1788), have been read with lively interest. The text refers to the former.

60, 33. **sold it for £60.** Mr. Welsh in his *A Bookseller of Last Century*, 1885, shows that B. Collins of Salisbury, in Oct. 28, 1762, paid £21 to Goldsmith for a third share in the *Vicar*. It is probable therefore that Johnson brought only an instalment, which may have been the £40 of the Hawkins version. The curious will find all the difficulties of the various versions of the sale of the *Vicar* reviewed in Dobson's *Life of Goldsmith*, chap vii.

61, 5. **Temple.** A district in London once owned by the order of Templars. The property passed to the Knights of St. John, who leased portions of the buildings to the students of law. In 1608 the Inner and Middle Temples passed into the hands of societies of the law.

**Brick Court**, belonging to the Middle Temple, was one of its earliest (1569) brick buildings. Goldsmith—according to his tailor, Mr. Filby—lived in “No. 2, up two pair of stairs.” Here he died, and in the burial-ground east of the choir of Temple Church he was buried. **Temple Bar** was a stone gateway separating, until 1878, the Strand from Fleet Street. The head and quarters of criminals were, until 1772, exposed on the Gate.

61, 25. **Francis Newbery.** See note 56, 17.

62, 2. **Mr. Cunningham.** Peter Cunningham (1816-1869), clerk in the Audit Office, author of lives of Drummond of Hawthornden, Inigo Jones, Nell Gwynne, etc. His edition of Goldsmith's works (1854) is the first complete and trustworthy edition.

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## CHAPTER IX.

63, 16. **Young.** The Rev. Edward Young (1681-1765), author of tragedies, satires, and *Night Thoughts*, a poem still popular.

63, 17. **Gray.** Thomas Gray (1716-1771), author of the *Elegy* and various odes, all marked by high distinction of melody and taste.

63, 19. **Akenside.** Mark Akenside (1721-1770) was a clever and brilliant poet and a prosperous physician. His fame rests on *The Pleasures of the Imagination*, published 1744.

63, 19. **Armstrong.** Dr. John Armstrong (1709-1779), author of medical essays and of various pieces of verse, *The Economy of Love*, 1736, (“a nauseous piece”,) *Art of Preserving Health*, 1744, (a popular didactic poem, his masterpiece,) etc.

64, 31. **accentuation of Niagara.** Goldsmith is not so far wrong as Black implies. The present form of the word is first used by De Monville in 1687 (Marshall, *Hist. Writings*, p. 183) and pronounced *ně a ga ra'* (a as in ‘far’). In English the early pronunciation was *ne a ga' ra*, or rather *nee a ga ra'* (Lippincott).

65, 24. **“particular principle.”** Each state, says Goldsmith in the dedication of the poem, has a particular principle of happiness, and all states may be equally happy.

66, 17. **Pope.** Alexander Pope (1688-1744), author of the *Essay on Man*, the *Dunciad*, etc., who was esteemed during his time as the greatest of English poets.

66, 28. **Charles Fox** (1749-1806). The celebrated Whig orator and statesman.

67, 6. **Struck for honest fame.**

"To catch the heart, or strike for honest fame."

*The Deserted Village.* l. 420.

67, 34. **Johnson's insolent ingratitude.** When Johnson, a Pembroke man, was at Oxford, he used to get notes of Mr. Bateman's lectures from his friend John Taylor of Christ Church, till he found that the Christ Church men began to laugh at his worn-out shoes. Then some one placed a new pair at his door, but he "threw them away with indignation."

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## CHAPTER X.

69, 28. **Ode to Pyrrha.** Bk. i. car. 5. of the odes of the Latin poet. Milton renders *simplex munditiis*, 'plain in thy neatness.'

70, 6. **old ballad.** Given in Percy's *Reliques* under the title

"Gentle Herdsman, tell to me." (No. XIV.)

71, 14. **Garden Court.** In the Temple; "the third turning on the right from Fleet Street in Middle Temple Lane. Goldsmith had chambers there from 1764-68.

71, 16. **small clothes.** Breeches.

71, 17. **roquelaure.** (*rok lōr'*) Fr. A cloak reaching to the knee, fashionable in the 18th century, taking its name from the Duc de Roquelaure.

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## CHAPTER XI.

73, 29. **Thwackum and Square.** Characters in Fielding's novel *Tom Jones*. Mr. Thwackum was the parson who had charge of Tom's instruction and whose "meditations were full of birch"; Mr. Square, a philosopher versed in Plato and Aristotle. The two seldom met without a disputation on human nature and the various actions of the hero of the story.

73, 30. **Robinson Crusoe and Friday.** Concerning "why God no kill the devil," sec. xxii. of Defoe's novel.

**73, 32. Religious Courtship.** A work written, in 1722, by Daniel Defoe, exhibiting the unhappy consequences of marriage between persons of different denominations in religion.

**74, 13. patched.** It was the fashion of ladies during and after Anne's reign to wear patches on the face and neck. So Goldsmith writes (*Citizen of the World*, Letter iii.) : "They like to have the face of various colours as among the Tartars of Koreki, frequently sticking on with spittle little black patches on every part of it, except on the tip of the nose." These were at times cut into fanciful patterns—stars, half-moons, etc.

**76, 3. de'us ex ma'china.** Lat. 'God from the machine.' On the classical stage, when it was difficult to bring about the desired solution to the difficulties of the plot, the author had recourse at times to an easy means of reaching the dénouement. A god descended by means of a machine upon the stage and put an end to all obstacles in the way of a proper termination of the plot. Hence in modern compositions, as the *Vicar of Wakefield*, when the author is in great difficulty in bringing about the dénouement desired, and introduces a character that will force the action into the desired channel, he makes use of a *deus ex machina*. Such was Mr. Jenkinson, who after selling Moses the green spectacles, imposing on Dr. Primrose with his patriarchal air, helping 'Squire Thornhill's villainies, turns up in prison as a reformed character, and by disclosing the marriage of Olivia and 'Squire Thornhill, and rendering other services, restores happiness into the Vicar's family.

**76, 14. "simple rogue."** See p. 16, l. 22.

**77, 6. Goethe.** John Wolfgang Goethe (1749-1832) the greatest force in the literature of modern times. During Goethe's student life in Strasburg, he came in contact with **John Gottfried Herder** (1744-1803), a man of deep reading in many literatures and of wide sympathies. Herder introduced Goethe to Homer, Shakespeare, and modern English writers especially Goldsmith.

**80, 33. tobacco-stoppers.** Small plugs for pressing down tobacco in the pipe as it is being smoked.

**81, 4. appointment.** Direction.

**81, 15. Madame Riccoboni** (1714-1792). Actress and author, wife of Antonio Riccoboni, French actor and author.

81, 16. **Garrick.** David Garrick (1717-1779), a dramatic author, but especially famed as an actor of the very first rank in tragedy, comedy, and farce. See his "epitaph" on p. 126.

81, 16. **Le plaidoyer....plaire.** Fr. "Pleading on behalf of robbers, petty thieves, people of corrupt morals is far from giving us pleasure." The letter is in the *Garrick Correspondence*, ii., 492. The quotation is given in Forster's *Life*, i.

81, 19. "vastly low." See p. 31. l. 1.

81, 22. **Southey.** Robert Southey (1744-1843), poet-laureate preceding Wordsworth. His remark is referred to by Forster, i., 423 n.

82, 13. **Devil Tavern.** Formerly standing between Temple Bar and Middle Temple gate. In its early days the great room—"The Apollo"—saw the admirers of Ben Jonson gather around their idol.

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## CHAPTER XII.

84, 18. **George Colman** (1732-1794). A dramatic author, manager of Covent Garden Theatre, and afterward proprietor of Haymarket Theatre.

84, 21. **res angusta domi.** Latin proverb, 'straitened circumstances at home,' a euphemism for poverty, quoted from Juvenal.

84, 28. **Government of the day.** The reference is to the notorious Grafton ministry (1767), of which **Lord Sandwich** was Postmaster General. The scandals attending the ministry exposed it to the attacks of Junius in the *Public Advertiser*. Parson **Scott** was himself one of pseudonymous revilers in the public press.

85, 20. **Mr. Bensley.** Who read the prologue and took the part of Leontine.

85, 33. spoken "at." Intended to inform the spectators of the drift of the play, though not ostensibly addressed to them.

86, 5. **Crooked Lane.** Off Cannon Street, City.

86, 19. **luxury of woe.** This phrase is the poet Moore's.

"Weep on, and as thy sorrows flow  
I'll taste the luxury of woe."

*Anacreontique.*

86, 30. **Beau Tibbs.** Cf. p. 48, and Letters liv. and lxxi. of the *Citizen of the World*.

87, 5. **of the house**, i.e. of Commons, a member of parliament.

87, 6. **the modern poet.** Edmund Waller (1605-1687), a doubtful Royalist, author of various graceful poems chiefly dedicated to Saccharissa (Lady Sidney).

87, 11. **land-carriage fishery.** This is, I fancy, Mr. Lofty's verbiage.

87, 12. **stamp act.** The act [1765] of the British parliament imposing taxes on all documents in the American colonies.

87, 12. **jag-hire**, or ja'ghir. An E. Indian term denoting a district the government revenue of which is allotted to an individual in return especially for the maintenance of troops.

87, 20. **levees** (*lə vɛz'*). Morning receptions of guests.

87, 21. **measures, not men.** This is, I believe, the earliest occurrence in literature of the phrase. Burke in his *Thoughts on the Present Discontents* refers to "the cant of, not men, but measures."

88, 28. **Old Woman**, etc. This ballad concerns "an old woman tossed in a blanket seventeen times as high as the moon." The full account of the night in the club is given by Piozzi on the authority of Dr. Johnson.

89, 26. **in the Fleet.** The Fleet Prison, which existed from Norman times down to 1846. But note the witty double sense.

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### CHAPTER XIII.

90, 16. **Mr. Blackstone.** (Sir) William Blackstone (1723-1780), author of very famous commentaries on the *Laws of England* (1765-9).

90, 24. **Tyrian.** There was a celebrated purple dye prepared in ancient Tyre (Asia Minor), so that "Tyrian" became synonymous with rich-coloured.

90, 30. **Kelly.** Mr. Hugh Kelly (1739-1777), born in Killarney, novelist, critic, dramatist. His comedy *False Delicacy* was produced at Drury Lane in 1768 under Garrick, who did his utmost to secure the success of the play over Goldsmith's *Good-Natured Man*, produced six days later at Covent Garden.

92, 5. "Goldy." Johnson's nickname for Goldsmith, as "Bozzy" was his nickname for Boswell.

92, 14. Cooke. William Cook (—1824), an Irish law student who had chambers near Goldsmith in the Temple, author of poems, dramas, and dramatic criticism. His *Memoirs of Foote* (see 121, 33) contain contemporary references.

93, 9. City Road. Running from Islington to Finsbury Square in London.

93, 9. Highbury Barn. A tavern in Highbury, a district near Islington, and a crowded resort towards the end of the century.

93, 11. White Conduit House. In Pentonville (near Islington), a place once popular for entertainments and tea-gardens.

93, 12. Grecian. A tavern in Devereux Court, Strand, once kept by Constantine, a Greek. It was "the favorite resort of Irish and Lancastrian Templars." (Forster.)

93, 12. Temple Exchange. Once a coffee house near Temple Bar.

93, 13. Globe. Tavern in Fleet Street, now only a memory. The Club met there Wednesday evenings.

94, 3. Mr. Bott. Edmund Bott was a barrister having rooms opposite Goldsmith's in the Temple, and shared Goldsmith's Edgware cottage. His treatise on the *Poor Laws* was revised by Goldsmith.

94, 4. Edgware Road. Leading from Tyburn to Edgware. Goldsmith's lodgings were in "a farmer's house near the six mile stone." (Boswell.)

94, 16. put up the horse-collar. Allusion of the vulgar joke at country fairs of grinning through a horse-collar.

94, 29. Kenricks, Campbells, etc. See note 33, 5. These were all hack-writers of the time.

95, 3. 'Maxime,' etc. 'Greatly, if thou wilt, do I desire to contend with thee.'

95, 11. shuttlecock. The game of battledore or shuttlecock is played with battledores (resembling tennis rackets) and shuttlecocks (corks furnished with feathers). The game consists in keeping the latter in motion back and forward.



95, 16. **like the Monument.** Dr. Johnson's play *Irene*, produced on the 6th Feb., 1749, was on the whole a failure. Nevertheless the author, when asked how he felt its failure, replied, "Like the Monument." [*i.e.*, the monument of the Great Fire of London (1666), erected 1671-77.]

97, 15. **'Forsitan,' etc.**

'Perchance our names, too, will be mingled with those.'

Ovid, *De Arte Amandi*, I. iii. 13.

97, 18. **heads on Temple Bar.** See note 61, 5.

97, 23. **Thrale.** See note 60, 18.

#### CHAPTER XIV.

99, 20. **Mickle.** William Mickle (1734-1788), a Scotchman who translated (1771-5) the *Lusiad* of the Portuguese poet Camoens.

99, 27. **Lucius Florus.** A Roman historian during the reign of Trajan or Hadrian, author of an *Epitome de Gestis Romanorum* (Epitome of Roman history).

99, 28. **Eutropius** (—-370 A.D.). Secretary to the Emperor Constantine, author of a brief narration of Roman history down to the time of the Emperor Valens (364 A.D.).

99, 29. **Vertot.** René Aubert, abbé of Vertot (1655-1735), the French author of histories of the Revolutions of Portugal (1689), of Sweden (1696), of the Roman Republic (1719), etc.,—a man of very great talent and wonderfully popular with his contemporaries.

101, 29. **four lines he contributed.** "Dr. Johnson favoured me by marking the lines which he furnished Goldsmith's *Deserted Village*, which are the four last."—Boswell.

"That trade's proud empire hastes to swift decay,

As ocean sweeps the labour'd mole away;

While self-dependent power can time defy,

As rocks resist the billows and the sky."

102, 23. **Sir Walter Scott.** In the article on Goldsmith in his *Lives of Eminent Novelists*.

103, 14. **Norval.** The hero of Home's romantic drama of *Douglas* (see note 26, 20). Every school-boy knows the speech of Douglas, "My name is Norval," etc., Act II., Sc. i.

103, 15. **Geraghty.** The lines beginning "All but yon widow'd solitary thing" are supposed to apply to Catharine Geraghty, known to the poet during his early years.

103, 17. **the village preacher.** Identified as the poet's father by Mrs. Hodson, as his brother Henry by others, as his uncle Contarine by the Rev. Dr. O'Connor.

104, 17. **delenda est.** 'Must be destroyed.' Allusion to Cato's words in the Roman Senate concerning the necessity of destroying Carthage: *Delenda est Carthago*, 'Carthage must be destroyed.'

105, 3. **having faith,** etc. Cf. Matt. xvii., 20.

105, 9. **loveliest village of the plain.**

"Sweetest Auburn! loveliest village of the plain."

*The Deserted Village*, l. 1.

105, 31. **pre-Wordsworthian.** Interest in nature as a subject of literary art was virtually absent during the reign of the classical school of poetry from Dryden (1631-1701) till the coming of Cowper (1731-1800), and in the sense of a passionate interest till the coming of Wordsworth (1770-1850).

106, 11. **Altama.** A river of Georgia, U. S. A.

106, 33. **Torno.** Or better Tornea, a river of Lapland flowing through a rocky country, separating Swedish and Russian dominions, and emptying into the Gulf of Bothnia.

106, 33. **Pambamarca.** One of the highest of the Andes, near Quito.

108, 15. **Griffin.** Publisher of *The Good-Natured Man*, *Animated Nature*, and the *Deserted Village*.

108, 33. **Royal Academy.** Founded, chiefly through the efforts of Sir Joshua Reynolds, in 1768.

109, 5. **cousin Lawder.** Who married Jenny, daughter of Goldsmith's uncle Contarine. Jenny was the poet's companion and probably his sweetheart in 1752.

109, 15. **George Faulkenor** (1699?-1775) or Faulkner. Book-seller and printer in Dublin. He printed the first collected edition of Swift's works and was, according to the Dean 'the prince of Dublin printers.'

109, 18. **mezzotinto** (*měz zo tint' o*). Ital. 'half-tint,' "engraving on copper or steel by drawing on a surface previously roughened, and then removing the roughness in places by scraping, burnishing," etc.

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## CHAPTER XV.

110, 15. **Your mandate I got**, etc. The poet's reply to an invitation to dinner at Sir George Baker's about the year 1769, to meet the Misses Horneck, Sir Joshua Reynolds, Miss Reynolds, Angelica Kauffman, and others.

110, 28. **Kauffman**. Angelica Kauffman (1741-1807), a famous woman painter. She came to England with Lady Wentworth in 1765, and there gained the friendship of Reynolds. It was her picture of him that gave rise to the poem in the *Advertiser* to which Goldsmith refers (111, 8) and which ran :

"While fair Angelica, with matchless grace  
Paints Conway's lovely form and Stanhope's face;  
Our hearts to beauty willing homage pay;  
We praise, admire, and gaze our souls away.  
But when the likeness she hath done for thee,  
O Reynolds! with astonishment we see,  
Forced to submit, with all our pride we own,  
Such strength, such harmony excell'd by none,  
And thou art rivall'd by thyself alone."

112, 24. **Ranelagh**. Rotunda and gardens on the site of the villa and gardens of Earl Ranelagh. Promenade concerts and masquerades were the chief attractions. (See 115, 28.)

112, 26. **Lord Clare** (—1788). Robert Nugent, afterwards Viscount Clare, was an Irishman who grew rich by marrying widows. He was a wit and poet, with a loud voice and an Irish brogue. Goldsmith had in him his only patron.

112, 28. **quips and cranks**. Milton's "Quips and cranks and wanton wiles," in *L'Allegro*, l. 25.

112, 34. **Lord Camden** (1713-1793). Charles Pratt, Earl of Camden, who won fame as a judge in the trial of Wilkes and as a politician in opposing the Rockingham administration.

113, 20. **Autol'ycus**. An ancestor of Ulysses who received from Mercury the gift of skilful thieving, and who was especially skilful in

the stealing of cattle. Goldsmith's stealing is particularly skilful in the *Haunch of Venison*, where he copies Boileau, Sat. III. while in the *Elegy on Mrs. Blaize*, first printed in the *Bee*, he closely followed the *Chanson du fameux la Galisse*.

114, 29. **Heffernan**. Appearing in the poem as "H—ff," Paul Hiffernan was an Irish physician, critic, and idler, whose purse suffered from a disease which he termed impecuniosity.

114, 29. **Higgins**. Captain Higgins, 'my countryman,' who probably (Forster, ii, 349 n.) accompanied Goldsmith on his visit to Evans (see p. 121).

115, 2. **flounce**. A jerk or twist of the body, denoting (here) displeasure.

115, 3. **bounce**. Exaggeration, lie.

115, 16. **Mile End**. Formerly a country village east of White-chapel—one mile from the middle parts of London.

115, 24. **jeu d'esprit** (*zheu dēs prē*). A sally of wit.

## CHAPTER XVI.

116, 29. **sentimentalists and all their works**. Imitation of "the devil and all his works" of the Anglican catechism.

117, 18. **Water Parted**. Probably a contemporary tune is here 'hit' at.

117, 18. **Minuet in Ariadne**. Probably the *Ariadne* of Händel, first produced in England in 1734.

118, 3. **Covent Garden**. Once the garden of Westminster Abbey, now a square, with neighbouring market and a theatre, one of the most famous in London.

118, 33. **ecod**. Interjection—one of the many euphemisms of the oath 'by God.'

119, 15. **wauns**. Interjection.

119, 33. **old gods have any laughter left**. In Homer's *Iliad* i., 599 and *Odyssey*, viii., 326, xx, 346 reference is made to the ἀβυστος γέλως, the 'inextinguishable laughter' of the gods.

**120, 20. St. James's Park.** A beautiful park of some sixty acres, formerly belonging to the Palace of St. James. It was a favorite resort of Goldsmith.

**121, 13. Boswell did not come.** Black means that Boswell did not *return* to London. He had met Johnson there in 1763, he returned to London in March 1772, and was frequently there till Johnson's death in 1784.

**121, 33. Foote.** Samuel Foote (1720-1777), actor and dramatist, especially famous for his mimicry of his contemporaries. He entertained a notion of caricaturing Dr. Johnson, but refrained when the Doctor proposed to buy some good oaken cudgels and indeed sent him word that 'he would go from the boxes on the stage and correct him before the audience.'—*Monthly Review*, lxxvi. 374.

**122, 12. Homeric cloud.** A favorite device in Homer, to save a hero from death. For example, when Paris is getting worsted by the Greek Menela'os, Aphrodite snatches up the former, hiding him in thick darkness (*Iliad*, iii.); when Aineias falls before the Greek Diome'des, "him Phoebus Apollo took into his arms and saved in a dusky cloud, lest any of the fleet-horsed Danaans might hurl the spear into his breast and take away his life" (*Iliad*, v.).

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## CHAPTER XVII.

**123, 14. Beattie.** James Beattie (1735-1803), schoolmaster, professor, essayist, and poet. His *Essay on Truth* (1770), an answer to Hume's scepticism, was remarkably successful, but his melodious and picturesque poem *The Minstrel* is now his best known work.

**123, 25. Percy Memoir.** The biography prefixed to the 1801 edition of Goldsmith's works. The materials were collected by Bishop Percy, Malone, and others; the first draft was drawn by Dr. Campbell, the revision made by Percy.

**124, 26. Dr. Burney.** Charles Burney (1726-1814), doctor of music of Oxford, composer, and author of a famous *History of Music*.

**124, 32. Barton.** In Suffolk, where "Little Comedy," Miss Catherine Horneck (now Mrs. Bunbury), was living.

**125, 4. Cradock.** Joseph Cradock (1742-1826), man of letters, sheriff of Leicestershire, author of the tragedy *Zobeide*, etc. His "Literary and Miscellaneous Memoirs" contain his recollections of Goldsmith.

**125, 19. St. James's Coffee House.** In St. James's Street, near the Palace, frequented by Addison and Steele in Queen Anne days. It disappeared in 1806.

**127, 13. Ye Kenricks, ye Kellys, and Woodfalls.** See notes 33, 5 and 90, 30. William Woodfall was the printer of the *Morning Chronicle*.

**127, 16. be-Rosciused.** Dubbed with the title of Roscius, in a depreciatory sense. Garrick was actually called "the English Roscius," in recognition of his great talents. Quintus Roscius (B.C. 129-62) was a Roman actor of the very greatest renown. He had Cicero as a pupil in declamation.

**127, 19. Those poets.** Garrick was especially fine in the Shakesperian plays *Richard III.*, *Lear*, *Hamlet*; but he also played later dramas such as Rowe's *Fair Penitent*, Colley Cibber's *Schoolboy*.

**127, 22. Beaumont.** Francis Beaumont (1584-1616), Elizabethan dramatist, co-worker with Fletcher in very many powerful and beautiful plays.

**127, 22. Bens.** Ben Jonson (1574-1637), author of dramas chiefly in the classical manner, the greatest of the successors of Shakespeare.

**127, 35. tradition, etc.** Given in Malone's *Life of Sir Joshua Reynolds*.

## APPENDIX.

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A COURSE OF ESSAY WORK BASED ON SCOTT'S *QUENTIN DURWARD*  
AND BLACK'S *LIFE OF GOLDSMITH*.

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### INTRODUCTION.

The field of composition upon which the student enters as he begins to treat the subject of his prescribed work is very extensive. An historic novel like *Quentin Durward* introduces us to a throng of new ideas, a society of new faces, a world of new scenes. The story of such a life as Goldsmith's brings before us the manifold struggles of one of the happiest and at the same time one of the most miserable characters of literary history, and in revealing the sources and unfolding the details of his work affords us new insight and new pleasure in writings that have become to us, or should have become to us, life-long friends. Before all these new facts, persons, scenes, the main question that the student addresses to himself, is the question of the point of view from which he must consider his prescribed work.

Composition involves of course two elements—thought and expression. These elements are a duality, yet an inseparable duality. Improve the thought and you better the expression; clarify the expression and the thought becomes more effective. But while this is true, it is likewise true that the attention of the mind can be consciously directed to one or to the other of these elements, and that one element may be specially trained by one kind of study, and the other by another. For the cultivation of thought, books furnish the greatest of all means. So many keen thinkers and observers have lived in this world, chronicling their thoughts and observations in books, that one of our first duties as rational beings is to assimilate, as far as we can so do, the thoughts and observations of the God-gifted men. So doing, we shall rise on the shoulders of the past and widely and truly survey the present. Knowing the thoughts of many minds, we shall gradually attain to a justness, an openness of mind and a taste for high thinking and for perfect expression that characterize the man who reads widely and well.

It is given to few to be original, to have a mind spontaneously suggesting new thought, new combinations of thought. Yet we all wish to achieve originality. Now, originality that is worth anything is not to be had by abstention from the work of others. Every great poet, painter, or musician works with the spirits of the great dead moulding his thought and guiding his fingers. He has developed his own nature and trained its powers by intercourse with the work of the past. Similarly we may, in our feeble way, seek to assimilate the thoughts we read, and by thinking up to their level, living up to and through them, come to have the right to do with them as we please. When we have won the power of using the ideas of others in combinations of our own making, we do acquire a property-right in those ideas, and can without risk of copying put all books under contribution. We may then say with Molière, *je prends mon bien, où je le trouve*, I take my own wherever I find it.

But originality in a higher sense than that of the assimilation of thought and the use of it in new combinations, is possible with books. Ideas are like seeds in the mind, they have a germinating power. Plant a great idea, leave it, and lo ! when you return, it has become the centre of a group of thoughts that have unconsciously gathered about it from your own experience. This is the utmost that we can consciously do to train ourselves to be original thinkers. Let us, therefore, read our authors with pencil and memory for whatever ideas of nature and human life they express that seem to us true and beautiful. We shall then be on the highway to that greatest of mental powers, originality of thought.

But reading is not only a discipline and feeding of thought, it is a training in expression. The child learns to speak by hearing his mother and father speak ; the youth learns to write by constant reading of books ; and the permanent impress on his style comes from the style of those writers he has read most and with most interest. Beyond the simple words of ordinary intercourse, one learns what one knows of language—words and the meanings of words—chiefly from books, while the beauty of phrase, the musical charm of the sentence, one learns, it may be said, from books alone. There, too, we best master—consciously or unconsciously—the maxims of art, the rules and devices by which a description or narration progresses, or an argument or principle is laid before us.

The prescription of books to serve as a basis of composition, leads, it is hoped, to the careful reading of them ; first, that we may assimilate the best thoughts they contain, and second, that we may master to some extent the stylistic qualities of the author we read. When these



preparations are made, there remains the actual work of composition on the basis of the original. In this work the student will do well at first to follow the lines which an examination of the author's narrative or description reveals, working over the ideas that he derives from his reading and using the vocabulary that the author puts at his disposal. Little by little, as his confidence grows, he should introduce ideas that come from his own experience, so that the characteristics of slavish adherence to the text will gradually disappear from his copy of the original and his work will assume an independent character. Original composition of his own will then easily follow. It is unfortunate that his copy will be, as a rule, a blurred, distorted image—a caricature of its prototype. But there is a consolation in this—all apprenticeship work is thus. And the more acutely we feel our failure to reproduce the form and hues of the original, the more vividly we are dismayed by the abyss between the classic author and our own attempts, the more hope there is for our subsequent success. Our very artistic sense that shames us by revealing the gulf between the ease, the freshness, the beauty of a great writer, and our own poor attempts, will, as years of practice go on, surely teach us in some measure how to bridge the chasm, and in some measure how to approach the graces of the great masters.

Many minor rules of composition could here be brought forward, but most of them are included in one phrase: Use good taste. Taste can be shown as well in the paper, ink, and handwriting of the student as in his attention to the margins of his paper, the indentations of his paragraphs, and the punctuation of his sentences. Often mistakes are made in these matters from ignorance, but more frequently they arise from the lack of any feeling for form and finish in one's work. Good taste makes us ashamed, too, of anything like a bombastic, inflated, stilted style, bidding us write sensibly, naturally, as sensible, healthy people should. It casts out slang—the weeds that seek to choke the true words. It makes us eschew those trite quotations that, by too frequent use, have lost the grace and perfume with which they once could brighten dull prose. If in addition to attending these matters, the student will strive to write clearly and with whatever strength of expression he can in his hours of greatest mental vigor bring to bear, he will find a pleasure in his work, and a satisfaction when he reads it aloud to himself or to a sensible friend. In times of discouragement he should remember two things: First, that our language is a perfect instrument of expression—perfected by centuries of use, by multi-

tudes of people and especially by many great geniuses, so that there is no thought he can think for which there is not a perfect and complete expression. Second, that a power to write well, because it is based on a power to think justly on nature and human life, is, according to the testimony of the ages, that power which humanity cherishes as the most precious of all its faculties.

## KINDS OF COMPOSITION.

*Quentin Durward* and the *Life of Goldsmith* appeal to our interest, as we have seen above, in many and various ways. It is now an interest in the appearance and character of the personages that the writer evokes : now in the scenes and places that form the background of their action ; and, again, it is these actions themselves that call forth our interest and absorb our attention. These different kinds of interest are not necessarily kept separate and distinct ; rather are they intermingled, so that out of the blended skein of personage, scene, and incident rises the variegated and beautifully woven fabric of the novel or biography. Yet, in this varying play of interest, we notice that the web and the woof, so to speak, of the work are made from the (*a*) description of individual scenes, objects, or persons, or (*b*) the narration of the successive details of the incidents and series of incidents in the lives of the personages of the story. Usually, the one or the other of these two kinds of composition predominates, and gives its characteristic quality to the writing as *Descriptive* or *Narrative*.

The interest we have in a man's actions precedes our interest in his character or appearance. An easy proof of this is afforded by the eagerness with which children listen to stories in which the characters have a very shadowy existence indeed, but where the incidents are intelligible and impressive ; while they find elaborate descriptions wearisome. So, then, as a man's actions are our first interest, the account of actions is the first and easiest of all kinds of composition. Let us look then at narration.

## NARRATION.

*Narration Defined.*—Narration is the representation in words of the successive details that compose an incident or series of incidents. Scott's novels contain many admirable narratives, so that, if we wish to learn something of the art of the Wizard of the North, we can do no

better than study some of these. Let us take one in our author's best vein, the attack of Louis of Orleans and Dunois on Durward and his train,—

A STUDY IN NARRATION : ATTACK ON THE CONVOY.

(*Quentin Durward*, Chap. XIV.)

*Introductory Details :* The pursuit : the character of the pursuers is observed.

*Details of the narrative :* Preparations for combat are then made : the ladies go forward ; Guyot joins with Quentin to resist the two approaching knights ; the pursuers approach ; the parley, which brings on the combat.

The combat : the two parties come together ; result as to Guyot ; result as to Durward ; then the fight with Durward and Dunois.

*Conclusion*  
(*Dénouement*) : Then Lord Crawford approaches with his troop ; there is a consequent interruption of the fight ; explanations and comments.

*Sequence of Details.*—In this bald analysis we notice first that the various particulars composing the narrative are presented in the order of their occurrence. Hence the prime law in narration :—

**Rule 1.**—*Details in narrative must be presented in the order of their occurrence—in order of time.*

*Correlation of Details.*—The details that Scott brings forward will be found likewise to have a close interdependence. The discovery of the strange pursuers leads to the preparations for defence ; the approach of the knights, to the parley ; the outcome of the parley, to the combat. Guyot falls through the lack of a visor ; Quentin escapes the same fate only by his superior dexterity. The long and exciting combat of Durward and Dunois is carefully accounted for by the agility, lightness of armor, and courage of the one, and the strength, tried valor, and heavy panoply of the other. The actual issue of the combat is thus made to appear the natural, probable outcome of the conditions that the author has brought forward. In brief, we see that the details are so chosen that each has a direct bearing on the theme ; they have an interdependence such that every incident seems naturally to grow from that

which precedes or from the nature of the actors ; and they are of such a nature as to justify, as cause and effect, the outcome of the incident. Hence :

**Rule 1.**—*Details must be interdependent, each contributing to the main effect of the narrative. Each incident must appear to spring from the incidents that precede it, or arise naturally from the characters of the actors ; the incidents must afford a sufficient cause for the results, attributed to them.*

*Economy of Details.*—Examining the passage from another point of view, we notice that the details are not numerous, but are few and well chosen. Insignificant details such as those that might describe the riding forward of Petit-André are omitted. The feelings of the ladies watching the combat, forming a matter of interest to the hero of the struggle, are described, though not in detail. The main interest is by these means confined to the chief stream of the narrative. Even here we notice that only the chief incidents are specially referred to, while a mass of detail is roughly indicated by general terms, “dreadful blows,” “continued to assail,” “standing on the defensive,” etc. Hence :

**Rule 2.**—*Economize the details ; strike out the insignificant ones ; mass the details of small importance ; and give prominence by particular reference only to the chief incidents.*

*The Climax of Interest.*—Narrative is nothing as art unless the narrator is able to evoke an ever increasing interest in the fate of the hero. As we follow the incidents of the narrative we note the skill of the narrator in deepening step by step this plot-interest. The terror of the women, the indifference of Petit-André, the cowardice of two of the retinue, the danger from two heavily armed knights of unknown character ; these all throw into higher light the simple valor and dauntless resolution of Quentin. The death of Guyot lends a greater interest to Quentin's victory over his own antagonist, and enhances the interest with which we watch his combat with the second knight. This interest rises, till, just as we tremble for the life of our hero before the stronger and more experienced arm of Dunois, our excitement is relieved by the arrival of Crawford and the consequent ending of the unequal struggle. We see, then, that the reader must be led on from incident to incident until the culminating point of the story is attained—until the *dénouement* is reached, and the outcome calms and satisfies his excitement. Moreover, no hint is given, as we progress through the story, of the nature of the outcome. Every hint of the fate—good or bad—that is to befall the hero is carefully suppressed so as to pique the interest and

arouse the imagination.\* The details of the narrative rise in significance, or, as we say, the plot thickens, until the *dénouement* is reached.

**Rule 4.**—*Eccite curiosity by withholding the issue of the incident till the last moment. Have the subsidiary details throw higher light upon the actions of the chief personages. Arrange the main details in the order of increasing importance, so that the interest is greatest as the *dénouement* is reached. This *dénouement* must satisfy our interest in the fate of the personages of the narrative.*

#### STUDIES AND EXERCISES IN NARRATION.

##### *Quentin Durward.*

#### I. The Adventures of Quentin Durward.

The following divisions may with advantage be chosen for different essays :

- (a) Durward's first meeting with Louis XI.
- (b) How Durward joined the Scottish Archers.
- (c) The journey from Plessis-les-Tours to Liège with accounts of (i) The encounter with the Duke of Orleans and (ii) The treachery of Hayraddin, the guide.
- (d) How Durward won the Lady Isabelle de Croye.

#### II. The Boar-hunt of Louis XI.

#### III. The Capture of the Castle of Schonwaldt.

#### IV. The Siege of Liège.

##### *Life of Goldsmith.*

#### V. The Life of Oliver Goldsmith.

The following sub-divisions will furnish topics for different essays :

##### (a) Early Life.

Parentage ; social circumstances : school-days ; details of this life ; illustrative stories showing his personal appearance, mental powers, etc.

##### (b) College Life.

Entrance into Trinity College ; sizarship ; escapades ; first apprenticeship to literature ; general results of his college life.

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\* In biography the plot-interest is of less importance than in the novel, though not to be neglected. Interest may therefore be aroused by a general introductory statement of the great importance of the subject of the biography.

## (c) The Choice of a Profession.

Life in his mother's home ; the question of his future ; the church ; a tutorship ; the law ; medicine ; seeing Europe on foot.

## (d) London Life.

Prospects in London, based on the advantages and disadvantages of his character and position ; refusals ; the chemist's shop ; medical practice ; proof-reading ; usher. Summary of the years 1756-7.

## (e) Apprenticeship to Literature.

Introduction to Griffiths ; terms of engagement ; character of the work done ; references to Home's *Douglas*, Smollett's *History*, etc. ; breaking off.

## (f) Arrested for Debt.

Friends ; habits and mode of life, with illustrative stories leading up to a narrative of his arrest for debt in 1764, and his release through the intervention of Dr. Johnson.

## (g) Authorship.

Entrance to literature by means of the *Enquiry* and the *Bee*. Permanent work in the *Citizen of the World*, *Beau Nash*, the *Traveller*, the *Vicar*, the *Good-Natured Man*, the *Deserted Village*, *She Stoops to Conquer*.

## (h) Death.

Debt ; ill-health ; *Retaliation* ; last days ; death and burial ; effect of his death on his friends ; Johnson's epitaph.

## DESCRIPTION.

*Description Defined.*—Description portrays in words individual scenes, objects, or persons ; it portrays in an order of space, and thereby differs from narration, which represents details in an order of time. It will be noted at the outset that the descriptive element plays an important part in every narrative. By description we can give the back-ground and setting of the incidents, create the spirit and atmosphere in which the characters are to move, arouse interest in the characters of the personages, and afford a relief from the monotony of a purely narrative interest. Behind Louis XI.

lies the castle of Plessis-les-Tours, gloomy, forbidding, impregnable. Around Quentin Durward are the breezy country scenes or the clashing of arms in open warfare. We shall briefly examine one of the many descriptions in *Quentin Durward*—a scene which has a purely descriptive interest apart from the narrative,—the castle of Plessis-les-Tours.

#### A STUDY IN DESCRIPTION : PLESSIS-LES-TOURS.

(*Quentin Durward, The Feudal Castle, Chap. iii.*)

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| (i) <i>The Theme.</i>  | The sight of Plessis-les-Tours.   |
| (ii) <i>General Introduction, giving the general effect.</i> | Air of strength and watchfulness.   |
| (iii) <i>Details.</i>  | Situation ; on gentle elevation, surrounded by an esplanade.  |
|  | Walls ; first, second, third with corresponding moats.  |
|  | Castle buildings ; donjon-keep, other buildings.  |
|  | Entrance ; towers, portcullis, drawbridge.  |
| (iv) <i>The Conclusion.</i>                                  | The general character of the fortress, as shown in the remarks of Durward and the king on its strength and on the nature of the garrison. |

We notice, then, that this description involves a methodical presentation of the scene, following the scheme of (i) *Theme*, (ii) *General Introduction*, (iii) *Details*, (iv) *Summary or Conclusion*. Some such plan as this is of great advantage to a writer in his composing.\* It guides him aright in the selection of details ; for with a definite plan of work before him irrelevant particulars will scarcely occur to him, or if they do by chance occur, they will at once be recognized as incongruous. More-

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\* It need scarcely be said that the student, though he may carefully plan his essay before setting to work to compose, should not indicate formally in his essay that he is following such a plan. The best art is *ars celare artem* : when the building is completed, take away the scaffolding.

over he will be able most easily to amplify his paragraphs from the ideas suggested by the different headings of his plan. From the reader's standpoint, too, there is a great advantage, since the unified, compact, symmetrical nature of the composition gives him a clear impressive conception of the scene. He feels the composition is a complete harmonious structure—as well-built, as perfectly balanced as a piece of architecture or a figure in marble.

(i) *The Statement of the Theme.* To write clearly and effectively, a writer must know very definitely the theme of his discourse. Especially in abstract themes it is of decided advantage at once to state the theme, and define its nature. On the other hand the reader finds such a statement of theme almost indispensable, because without it he cannot easily understand the general drift of the writer's thought, nor can he grasp his subsequent statements in their proper relationship. There is, however, as we saw before, one important exception to be made. In narration, where curiosity must be aroused, it is usually advisable to keep the reader for a time in suspense as to the real drift of the story. This can best be done without any definite statement of the theme.

**Rule 1.**—*State at the outset (unless you have good reasons to the contrary) the theme of the description.*

(ii.) *The General Outline.*—It is usually helpful to a writer to have before him in general outline the scene he is about to describe. He is then guided in selecting those details that will amplify and illustrate the general effect of the scene. The reader, too, finds a general outline helpful, for by it he is enabled most easily to grasp the general character of the description and to arrange the details in their proper connection, and—most important of all—he is put into that disposition of mind in which the author wishes him to receive the composition.

**Rule 2.**—*Let a general outline of the scene you describe precede the detailed description, and, when possible, give the key-note to the description—its grace, pathetic, romantic tone—by means of this general outline.*

(iii.) *The Details.*—(a) *The Point of View.*—In the description outlined above we do not find a confused mass of details. The author does not enter into minute details of the history of the castle, nor does he describe its interior. He chooses his point of view outside the castle, and rigidly excludes all details not naturally unfolding themselves from that point of view.

**Rule 3.**—*In the selection of the details the writer must be guided by the point of view from which he writes. He must select only such details as harmonize with his plan.*



(b) *Economy of Details*.—Scott might have enumerated a mass of details, architectural, military, historical terms. He chooses however only those that call up the elementary characteristics of the castle, and thus pictures it simply and clearly to us.

**Rule 4.**—*When many details present themselves it is better to make the most of the most characteristic, letting the others rest in the background or be suggested by the general tone of the description.*

(c) *Sequence of Details*.—Again, there is a rational arrangement of details. They follow a regular order—the esplanade leads to the walls, the walls to the interior buildings, then to the details of entrance, etc. In just such a way would the eye take in the scene.

**Rule 5.**—*Follow the natural sequence of details as they reveal themselves one by one to the observer.*

(iv) *The Summary or Conclusion*.—The advantage of the Conclusion is that it summarizes and fixes the details of the description. The reader is enabled to gather the full significance of the scene, and the writer, rising upon the details he has enumerated, is afforded an opportunity for climacteric effect, by which he can give a powerful and satisfying finish to his composition.

**Rule 6.**—*There should in general, be a Conclusion or Summary that will summarize the details of the description, and give the composition its highest elevation of tone.*

Sketches of persons are equally as interesting as sketches of scenes from nature or the works of man. The portraits of the personages of *Quentin Durward* are sketched with easy yet clear outlines. Examine any one of these and it will be found to be written in very much the same lines as the description discussed above. The picture we get of Durward himself rises gradually before us, from the time he is introduced (Chap. II.) as a youth crossing the ford near Plessis-les-Tours, when we are first told in a general way, that he is nineteen or twenty years of age, with prepossessing, yet foreign face and person; then, little by little, the outline is filled in with details of dress, equipment, form, complexion, features, and, most important of all, with details of the good humor, lightness of heart, and determined resolution of the hero. Comments on his disposition form the conclusion of the description.

Similarly, Black gives us numerous descriptions of Goldsmith's works. Chapter XI., for example, he devotes to an account of *The Vicar*.

Having narrated the details of publication in connection with Goldsmith's life, he at once attacks the work itself, stating :—

<i>The Theme :</i>	<i>The Vicar of Wakefield.</i>
<i>A General Remark on plot :</i>	A comparison with the Book of Job.
<i>Details :</i>	Details of the comparison to show the nature of the plot. Criticism of the plot. Relation of the work to human life ; illustrative references and quotations. Blemishes in the story ; essential truth of its atmosphere. Contemporary criticism; Madame Riccoboni, the journals, etc.
<i>Conclusion :</i>	Effect on friends, on the public, on the author himself.

#### STUDIES AND EXERCISES IN DESCRIPTION.

##### *Quentin Durward.*

- I. Louis XI.
- II. The Duke of Burgundy.
- III. William de la Marck.
- IV. Louis de Bourbon, Bishop of Liège.
- V. Philip des Comines.
- VI. Louis of Orleans.
- VII. Lord Crawford.
- VIII. The Cardinal de Balue.
- IX. Oliver le Dain ; Tristan l'Hermite.
- X. Galeotti ; The Astrologer.

[Characters of history.]

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- XI. Quentin Durward : The Cavaliero of Fortune.
  - XII. Ludovic Lesly : The Man-at-Arms.
  - XIII. Hayraddin : The Bohemian.
  - XIV. Isabelle de Croye.
  - XV. The Countess Hameline de Croye.
  - XVI. Trudchen Pavillon.

[Characters of fiction.]

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XVII. Plessis-les-Tours.

XVIII. The Court of Louis XI.

XIX. France at the accession of Louis XI.

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*Life of Goldsmith.*

For compositions on these subjects the writer is advised carefully to read the works marked \*; he will then, and then only, write with sincerity and ease, and have at his command those references and quotations which alone can give animation to his work.

XX. *The Enquiry.*

[Circumstances of publication; the object of the work (the point of view of the author); a review and critique of contents (the point of view of the reader); results of the publication to the critics, to Goldsmith, to literature.]

XXI. *The Bee*.\*

[Circumstances of publication; character of the magazine; review and critique of Goldsmith's contributions; collapse of the magazine.]

XXII. *The Citizen of the World* (\*Selections).

[Circumstances of publication; character of the work; relation of the plan of the work to its sources; contents reviewed (sketches of manners and character); value as literature.]

XXIII. *The Life of Richard Nash*.\*

[Who was Nash? how Goldsmith came to write his life; circumstances of publication; a critique of the work.]

XXIV. *The Traveller*.\*

[Circumstances of publication, the plan of the poem; relation to the author's life; its principles of political economy; its value as literature; the condition of contemporary poetry; the consequent importance of the poem in the history of literature.]

XXV. *The Vicar of Wakefield*.\*

[Circumstances of publication; outline of the plot; the faults and merits of the work; the condition of the literature of fiction at time of publication; effect of the *Vicar* on contemporary literature, on foreign literature; the permanent value of the composition as literature.]

XXVI. *The Good-Natured Man*.\*

[Circumstances of composition and production on the stage; the first performance; character of the comedy, its critical value; result to its author.]

XXVII. *The Deserted Village*.\*

[Circumstances of publication ; plan of the poem ; autobiographical touches ; political theories ; literary qualities ; its success ; its permanent value as literature.]

XXVIII. *She Stoops to Conquer*.\*

[Circumstances of composition and production ; the first performance ; the plot literary merit, and place in literature.]

## XXIX. Oliver Goldsmith.

[Personal appearance and traits of character, general characteristics of his genius.]

FINIS.













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